

' Hamas leader worried over clash with PNA'

GAZA CITY (AFP) — Hamas spiritual leader, Sheikh Ahmad Yassin, has said his movement had a "hard choice" whether to continue its jihad (holy war) against Israel and risk confrontation with the Palestinian National Authority (PNA), another Islamist faction said Saturday.

"We face a hard choice, either we stop our jihad or we enter into a conflict with the Palestinian [National] Authority," Sheikh Yassin said in a conversation with officials from the Islamic Jihad in his Gaza City home on Friday.

Islamic Jihad, a minor Islamist group with close links to the PNA, reported Sheikh Yassin's comments in a statement received by Agence France Presse on Saturday.

"Jihad must continue because it is our duty to defend ourselves as long as the [Israeli] occupation continues," he said.

But "we do not want to enter in a confrontation with the authority. No matter how much the authority persecutes us, our sole enemy remains Israel. There must not be Palestinian bloodshed and we must preserve unity," he said.

Sheikh Yassin also warned that Hamas "has the ability to disturb Israel's security so that settlers and investors and tourists flee our raped lands."

"We have the faith and we are prepared to die for our cause," he said.

In September, Palestinian Preventive Security forces launched a crackdown against Hamas, arresting 80 of its members and closing 16 of its institutions after the group conducted a pair of Jerusalem bombings in the summer.

Israel has insisted that the PNA step up the fight to uproot Hamas from self-rule areas before it will move forward in the peace process.

Scalfaro tours downtown Beirut; meets opposition leaders

BEIRUT (AP) — Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro toured war-damaged downtown Beirut on Saturday and met Lebanese opposition leaders as he wound up a four-day state visit.

President Scalfaro viewed a model of the huge reconstruction project in the heart of the Lebanese capital, then drove through downtown areas where work is under way.

The Italian president visited the Maronite Patriarchate north of Beirut and later met

Islamist politicians and Lebanese Christian opposition leaders.

Mr. Scalfaro was scheduled to depart to Rome later Saturday. Italy, Lebanon's biggest foreign trade partner, has contributed more than \$300 million to this country's multibillion dollar reconstruction drive.

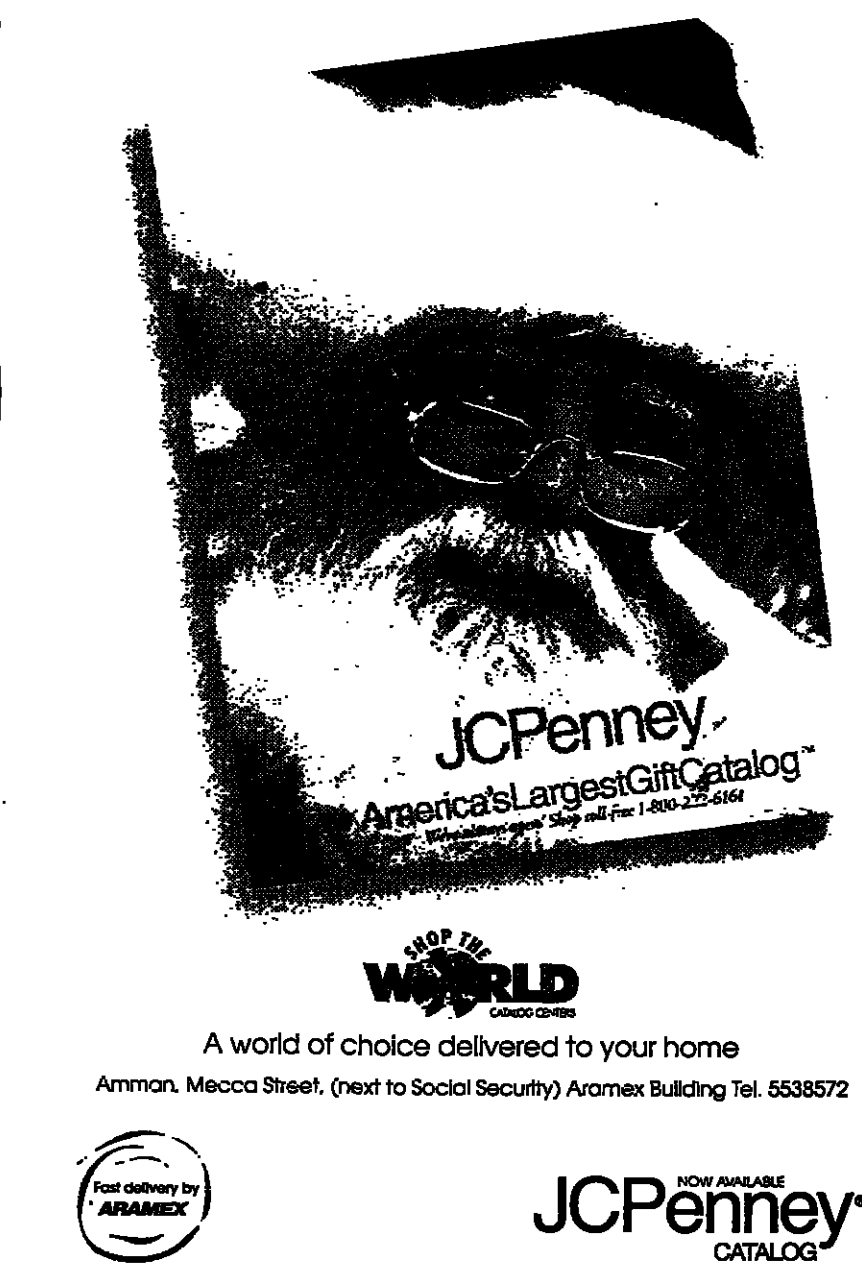
During this year and next, Italy is expected to give Lebanon \$110 in credits, soft loans and grants, according to Italian diplomats.

In his talks with Lebanese President Elias Hrawi on Thursday, President Scalfaro offered Italian help to bring peace to southern Lebanon, but he did not specify the kind of help his country was considering.

Israel established a 15-kilometre deep self-declared "security" zone in south Lebanon in 1985, the claimed aim of which is the protection of northern settlements from cross-border guerrilla attacks.

Israeli troops and an allied Lebanese Christian militia frequently clash in the south with Hizbollah guerrillas.

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Algerian bomb kills four children

PARIS (R) — Four children were killed when a bomb exploded at an abandoned house in western Algeria earlier this week, a national newspaper reported on Saturday.

Al Khabar daily also reported that another bomb in Algiers killed one person and wounded three while suspected Islamists slaughtered five civilians southwest of the capital.

The paper said the four children died on Thursday when a booby-trapped house blew up in Sidi Lakhdar area in Tlemcen, some 400 kilometres west of Algiers.

A second bomb went off the same day in Algiers killed one and wounded three at a bus station in Ain Benian area, the newspaper said.

No one claimed responsibility for the bombings. Hundreds of civilians perished in bomb attacks in Algeria in the past five years. The authorities blamed

Islamists on the attacks. Gunmen, thought to be Islamists, cut the throats of five civilians also on Thursday in Sobha area in Chief province, 150 km south west of Algiers, said Al Khabar.

JORDAN TELEVISION

PROGRAMME TWO
14:10 Little Rosey
14:30 Joany Quest
14:50 The Magic School Bus
15:00 Energy Express
15:30 American Chart Show
16:30 Tarzan
17:00 French Programmes
19:00 News in French
19:30 News Headlines
19:35 Fresh Prince of Belair
20:00 Cinema Cinema Cinema
20:30 Hot Shots
21:10 Renegade
22:00 News in English
22:30 The Bourne Identity
23:15 The Jewel in the Crown

PRAYER TIMES

04:35 Fair
05:54 (Sunrise) Duba
11:19 Dhuhur
14:19 'Asr
16:45 Maghreb
18:04 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Sweifeh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366.
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Armenian International Church Tel. 824328.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 688404.
The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932.
Church of Nazarene Tel. 675691.
The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295.
English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology
Skies will be partly cloudy with a chance of scattered showers, and winds southeasterly moderate. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly moderate to active and seas calm.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman 12/22
Aqaba 19/30
Deserts 11/24
Jordan Valley 19/30

Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 22, Aqaba 30 Humidity readings: Amman 36 per cent, Aqaba 38 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

AMMAN:
Dr. Mukhlis Mazharah 820425
Dr. Wissam Hayyin 748563
Dr. Munther Qraini 779959
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyib 620115
Firas pharmacy 661912
Ferdows pharmacy 778336
Al Asema pharmacy 637055
Nairokh pharmacy 623672
Al Salam pharmacy 636730
Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi Ta'ammeh 250080
Al Quds pharmacy (—)

NIGHT DUTY

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Dr. Munther Qraini 779959
Dr. Abdul Hadi Tayyib 620115
Firas pharmacy 661912
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Yacoub pharmacy 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy 637660
Najib pharmacy 847632
IRBID:
Dr. Ghazi Ta'ammeh 250080
Al Quds pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Salah Safarini 987565
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue 630341
Civil Defence Emergency 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 617101
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Dept. 605800
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water & Sewerage Complaints 87467
Amman Municipality Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs 661111
Jordan Television 773101
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100
Electricity Authority 815615
Electric Power Co. 636381
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity 642281/6
Aklieh Maternity 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Malhas, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani 607071
Shmeisani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musaher Hospital 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir 775111/26
Army, Marka 791611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50
Amal Hospital 674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital 09983323
Zarqa National Hospital 09900560
Ibn Sina Hospital 09986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital 09990900
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital 0275555
Greek Catholic Hospital 0272275
Ibn Al Nafes Hospital 02747100
AQABA:
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Army, Marka 791611/15
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Amal Hospital 674155
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FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-3, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (52700)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
07:50 Lamaca (RJ)
08:25 Bombay (RJ)
08:35 Jeddah (RJ)
09:15 Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
09:50 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
10:05 Beirut (RJ)
16:00 Madrid (RJ)
16:45 New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:00 Brussels, Geneva (RJ)
17:45 London (RJ)
18:05 Athens (RJ)
18:40 Frankfurt (RJ)
19:40 Rome (RJ)
20:55 Vienna (RJ)

Other Flights

03:25 Rome (AZ)
10:00 Sanaa (TY)
12:25 Bahrain (GF)
13:00 Moscow (SU)
15:00 Doha (QR)
17:45 Jeddah (SV)
20:00 Tel Aviv (LY)
20:10 Beirut (ME)
20:40 Cairo (MS)
23:10 Istanbul (TK)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:20 Beirut (RJ)
08:40 Frankfurt (RJ)
10:30 Vienna (RJ)
11:15 Rome (RJ)
11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:30 Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:15 London (RJ)

Other Flights

03:00 Athens (OA)
04:20 Rome (AZ)
06:15 Beirut (ME)
06:40 Beirut, London (BA)
07:50 London (BA)
11:00 Sanaa (TY)
13:15 Doha (GF)
14:50 Moscow (SU)
15:55 Doha (QR)
19:15 Jeddah (SV)
21:20 Tel Aviv (LY)
21:40 Cairo (MS)

Other Flights

06:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
08:15 Aqaba (RW)
09:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)
16:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
17:55 Tel Aviv (LY)
20:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)
21:50 Aqaba (RW)

ANTI-U.S. PROTEST: An Iraqi woman raises a picture of President Saddam Hussein while shouting anti-American slogans during a demonstration in Baghdad on Saturday. Anti-American demonstrations took place as Iraq blocked American members of U.N. arms inspection teams for the sixth straight day on Saturday and a senior Iraqi official prepared to leave for talks with the Security Council in New York over the standoff (Reuters photo)

Bahraini court starts trial in absentia of 8 opposition leaders

MANAMA (AFP) — The trial in absentia of eight Bahraini opposition leaders accused of seeking to overthrow the government opened here Saturday, an official source said.

The trial before the state security court was held in camera and without any legal representation for the defendants, the source added. It was adjourned until Nov. 15. The state security court was set up in 1976. Cases are heard by three judges. There is no right of appeal against its judgements.

After reading the charges against the accused, the prosecutor started presenting the state's case, the official source said.

The eight opposition leaders are accused of "incitement to acts of sabotage," "spying for a foreign country," leading an illegal organization named as "Hizbollah-Bahrain," and "propagating false and hostile rumours of a sort likely to harm the general interests of the country," newspapers here reported.

UAE slashes cost of major mosque project

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) has slashed the costs of a project to build one of the biggest mosques in the world, the business weekly Emirates Today reported on Saturday.

The value of the contract, awarded to the joint Italian venture Impregilo Rizzani De Eccher, was cut from \$397.8 million to \$218 million, it said.

The cost-cutting was ordered by the executive council, Abu Dhabi's government, and it involves revision of some engineering and construction designs, the magazine quoted official sources as saying.

It gave no further details but said construction of the mosque in the oil-rich emirate has started.

The Italian consortium, partly owned by the Italian auto giant Fiat, won the contract last year following strong competition from four other Western bidders — Bouygues of France, the Swedish Skanska company, Spain's Dragados Y Construcciones and Dumez-Ogre, a joint French-Saudi venture.

The mosque, named after its financier, UAE President Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan, will be completed within four years.

It covers an area of 400,000 square metres and is being built just south of Abu Dhabi near Al Maqta causeway, the city's only link to the mainland.

The towering marble and granite mosque, featuring ancient Islamic architecture,

will hold more than 7,000 worshippers and will be ringed by Islamic-style gardens, water fountains and other facilities. Its six minarets will each be around 110 metres high.

Officials said it would be the second biggest mosque in the Middle East after the King Hassan Grand Mosque in Casablanca, Morocco.

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

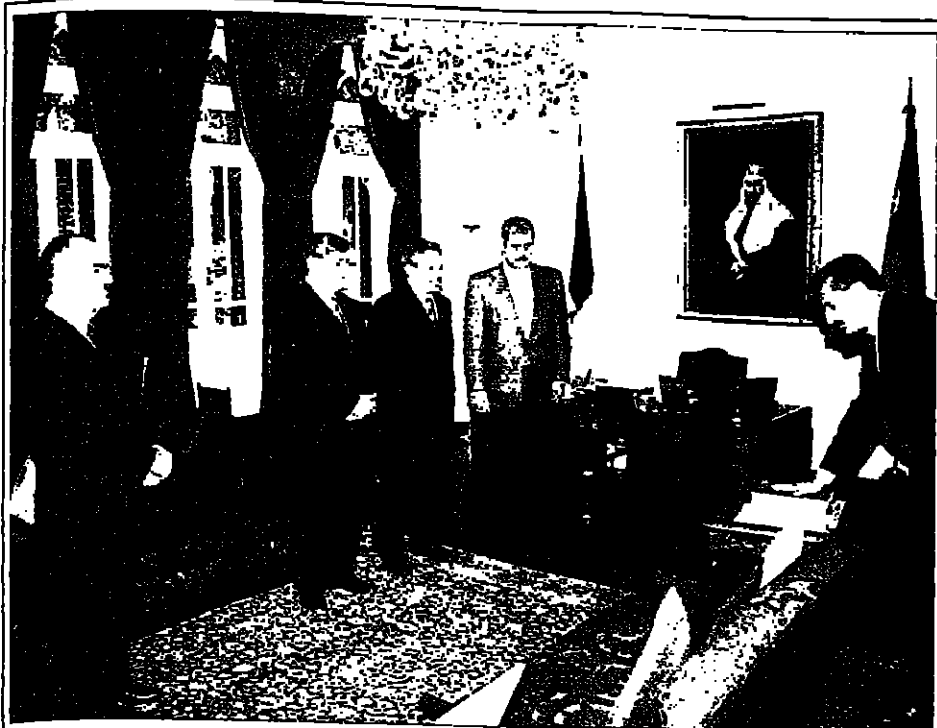
12:20 Athens (RJ)
20:10 Cairo (RJ)
20:30 New Delhi (RJ)
20:40 Damascus (RJ)
20:50 Jeddah (RJ)
22:30 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
22:30 Bangkok (RJ)
22:45 Sanaa (TY)
23:00 Abu Dhabi, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
23:00 Jakarta (RJ)

Other Flights

03:00 Athens (OA)
04:20 Rome (AZ)
06:15 Beirut (ME)
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20:30 Amman (QAIA) (RW)
21:50 Aqaba (RW)



NEW AMBASSADOR TO TURKEY SWORN IN: The newly-appointed Ambassador to Turkey, Musa Breizat, is sworn in before His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, at the Royal Court (Photo by Boghos)

Prince announces new centre to train therapists for disabled

KARAK (Petra) — HRH Prince Ra'd Ben Zeid, the chief chamberlain, Saturday announced that Mu'ta University will create a faculty awarding the BA degree in special education for the handicapped in order to produce graduates to help provide rehabilitation services in southern Jordan.

The Prince made the statement during a visit to the university, where he, Mu'ta University President Eid Dubayat, and other concerned officials reviewed the progress on the establishment of a centre for the early detection and diagnosis of disabilities.

The centre is to open its doors early in 1998, according to Prince Ra'd. Mu'ta University will also donate a four-dunum plot of land for the establishment of a multi-purpose hall for the benefit of the physically handicapped people in the southern regions, he said.

Prince Ra'd attended a ceremony in which 11 wheelchairs donated by the Jordan Phosphate Mines Company and the Arab Potash company were distributed.

In a brief address, the Prince said there is need for more qualified cadres to care for and rehabilitate the handicapped and he urged the private sector to join hands with the Ministry of Social Development and Mu'ta University to promote handicapped services.

Prince Ra'd also visited Tafleeh city and inspected the local 120-bed hospital, which was opened in 1992.

Resource centre to conduct study on women's participation in elections

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Princess Basma Women's Resource Centre (PBWRC) has announced its intention to conduct a study on women in the 1997 parliamentary elections, to be completed by the end of the year, according to a press release Sunday.

The study will evaluate women's participation in the elections as voters and candidates. From this study, women's groups can derive guidelines for future strategies for the advancement of women, according to the announcement.

The study, which will be conducted at the national level, will analyse voting practices and identify reasons for the absence of female representation in the current Parliament, the statement continued.

PBWRC Director Farah Daghistani stated that "while we are disappointed by the prospect of Jordan entering the 21st century with no female representation in Parliament, we realise that increasing women's political participation is a long-term process."

"There is much to be learned from the last elections, and we must strive to formulate new approaches for programmes in the next four years. We hope that our study will be a useful base from which we can plan ahead," the press release concluded.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Minister to attend environment conference in Cairo

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Municipal and Rural Affairs and the Environment Tawfiq Khreishan is scheduled to leave today for Cairo, where he will take part in the meetings of the Arab ministers of environment.

Dermatology conference to begin here next week

AMMAN (Petra) — Under the patronage of HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, the Second International Conference on Dermatology and Laser Surgery will begin here Nov. 17. The three-day conference will bring together specialists from the U.S., Greece, Italy, France,

Lebanon, Syria, Egypt, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Oman, the United Arab Emirates, and Jordan. More than 40 working papers will be submitted to the conference, which is being organised by the Higher Council for Science and Technology.

Minister calls for development of railway

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Transport and Telecommunications Bassam Saket Saturday visited the Hijaz Railway Corporation, where he inspected the maintenance sections and toured the corporation's various divisions. The minister called for developing the railway's performance and increasing its role in transportation.

WHAT'S GOING ON

CONCERT

* Piano recital by Hassan Mufi, marking the centenary of Chopin's birthday, at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh (Tel. 643251/2) at 7:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Bani Hamida fall exhibition "Encounter" (displaying rugs designed by Japanese textile designer Tomoko Iyoda) at Bani Hamida House, Jabal Amman, until Nov. 25 (Tel. 658696/77).

* Exhibition of wicker accessories from Wadi Rayan, handicrafts and gift items at the Jordan Rivers Designs showroom (Tel. 613081), until Nov. 23.

* Works by Su'ad Ibrahim entitled "The Soul Rest" at Hamourabi Art Gallery, Gardens Street (Tel. 553098), until Nov. 11.

* Paintings by Patrice Cadennec at the French Cultural Centre, Jabal Amman, until Nov. 20.

* Works by Bahraini artist Sheikh Rashid Al Khalifa at Darat Al Funun, Jabal Weibdeh, until Nov. 15. Also displaying a new collection of works by contemporary Arab artists (Tel. 643251/2).

Mulki highlights Kingdom's need to develop information technology

AMMAN (Petra) — A two-day conference on informatics was opened at the Royal Cultural Centre Saturday by Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Hani Mulki, who deputised at the opening session for HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent.

In his address, Dr. Mulki said Jordan has made some advances in promoting its informatics, or information technology, sector in the course of overall development, but the Kingdom has a long way to go to shift from its present role of being a recipient of scientific knowledge to interacting with the informatics world.

Stressing that the private and public sectors must cooperate in shouldering the responsibility of promoting informatics, Dr. Mulki said "we still lack an appropriate and efficient communications network pertaining to the exchange of information, and we have only acquired a tiny portion of informatics systems."

"Jordan has introduced training programmes for its human resources in various fields but the country still lacks certain specialisations needed to enable the Kingdom to accommodate the rapidly

advancing informatics technology. This should prompt us to reconsider informatics-related legislation," he continued.

The effects of the informatics revolution will overshadow the importance of the industrial revolution, according to Dr. Mulki, because he said information and technology are rapidly encompassing every field of daily life and are considered the dividing line between backwardness and progress.

Stating that informatics has been given due attention in Europe, Dr. Mulki said 25 per cent of European homes own computers and that 46 out of every 100 persons own a telephone, compared to Jordan's ten per cent, according to a World Bank report.

While only two per cent of national income in the Third World is spent on technology and information, the rate rises to 15 per cent in industrialised nations, he said.

Amjad 'Abweh, vice president of the Jordan Computer Association, said Jordan's imminent association with the World Trade Organisation (WTO) presents a major challenge to Jordanian industries to improve the standard and quality of

their products so that they can compete on the world market.

For this reason, he said, the country's educational and training programmes must be re-examined and geared up in order to help them respond favourably to the world market's needs.

Participants in the meeting will review several working papers dealing with informatics, data systems in Jordan, a national information network, criteria and standards governing the quality of products, and the outlook for the use of the Internet in Jordan.

Health professionals to 'temporarily accept' offer; two-hour strike planned for Monday

By Odeh Odeh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Representatives of the estimated 3,500 public sector health professionals who have been staging on and off work stoppages over the past few weeks have toned down their demands from the Ministry of Health and Medical Care but announced that they will observe a previously announced two-hour work stoppage Monday.

The presidents of the associations of pharmacists, dentists, and doctors, who are representing the health professionals, told a press conference that the strikers will temporarily accept the government's offer of 36 per cent of the patients' fund.

Basem Dajani, the president of the Jordan Medical Association and spokesperson for the strikers, said the health professionals are still demanding that the government pay them, as an incentive, a 60 per cent share of the patients' fund at later stages.

"We will continue to demand full rights, which

include pensions for health workers to be calculated on two-thirds of their salaries, an overtime allowance of 35 per cent of the total salary, an increase of the professional allowance from 90 per cent to 120 per cent, the right to a housing estate, scholarships for advanced training, and scholarships for their children at state universities," according to Dr. Dajani.

Dr. Dajani said he expected that a ministerial committee created during the crisis will convene next week to discuss steps

for a final solution to the problem.

He denied that the crisis was motivated by a personal problem between the associations and the minister of health and medical care and stated that the health professionals are demanding their legitimate rights.

He described a meeting held last week with former health ministers as successful, adding that these former ministers have created a committee to deal with the crisis.

Sa'id Abu Maizar, the president of the Jordan

Dentists' Association, told the press conference that the health professionals' demands are legitimate and are backed by decisions taken by Parliament and endorsed by a Royal Decree.

He stressed that the work stoppage observed by the health workers was not politically motivated, but rather an attempt to secure rights equal to those given to their colleagues working for the Royal Medical Services of the Jordan Armed Forces and the University of Jordan Hospital.

Cabinet approves sale of government shares in businesses

AMMAN (Petra) — The Council of Ministers Saturday approved recommendations by the Higher Ministerial Committee to sell part of the government's shares in the Jordan Cement Factory Company and the Ma'in Spa Company to the private sector.

The Cabinet also approved a recommendation by the same committee on the transfer of state-owned land worth JD6,636,304 to the National Electric Power Company, which is currently using the land.

The Cabinet endorsed an agreement with the Netherlands on promoting and protecting investments and authorised Minister of Industry, Trade and Supply Hani Mulki to sign the agreement during his stay in Doha, where he will attend the MENA Economic Summit later this month.

Minister of Interior Nathir Rashid presented a briefing on the Nov. 4 general elections.

A delegation was formed to take part in a meeting by Arab ministers of social affairs, due to open in Cairo Nov. 11. The delegation will be led by Minister of Social Development Mohammad Mansour.

The Cabinet also approved an agreement on cooperation in health affairs between Jordan and Yugoslavia and another agreement on cultural cooperation between Jordan and Malta. Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh was authorised to sign the agreements.



PRINCE FIRAS OPENS CONFERENCE: Deputising for Her Majesty Queen Noor, His Majesty King Hussein's Health Secretary Prince Firas Saturday opens the Eighth Arab Conference for Biological Sciences, which was organised by the Jordanian Society for Biological Sciences in cooperation with the University of Jordan and the Arab Biologists Union. Several Arab countries are taking part in the three-day conference (Petra photo)

Diabetes conference opens with call for more research, education

AMMAN (Petra) — The National Centre for Diabetes, Endocrine, and Inherited Diseases, in conjunction with the U.S.-based Physicians for Peace, Saturday opened a three-day conference on diabetes with the participation of physicians and specialists from the Royal Medical Services, the University of Jordan, the Ministry of Health, and the private sector.

The conference, the first of its kind in the country, was opened by Mohammad Zahiri, president of the Jordan Diabetes Society, who said diabetes is a worldwide problem that afflicts communities in both developed and developing nations.

Dr. Zahiri, who stood in for Minister of Health and Medical Care Ashraf Kurdi at the opening ceremony, said serious efforts should be made to spread awareness among the public on the dangers of this disease.

The Ministry of Health and Medical Care has been providing the necessary medical equipment and drugs at its hospitals and health centres and has been following up international scientific and medical research to find more advanced methods of dealing with the disease, he said.

Kamel Ajlouni, the centre's director, echoed the call for intensive scientific research efforts to combat diabetes, which he stated costs an estimated \$130 billion annually in treatment worldwide.

He outlined the centre's activities and programmes for treating the disease and stressed the need for close collaboration between various world institutions, particularly the Physicians for Peace, to fight diabetes.

Mahmoud Abu Khalaf, director of the University of Jordan Hospital, said specialists believe that the next decade will present serious challenges resulting from the expected huge increase in the number of diabetic patients, as well as other chronic, non-communicable diseases such as high blood pressure and arthritis.

During the meeting, the participants will discuss diagnosis of diabetes, the use of nuclear technology in treating patients, educating diabetic patients and their families on dealing with the disease, and diabetes affecting children, among other topics presented in working papers.

JORDAN TIMES FAX

696-183

Industrial nations make progress on CO2 pact

TOKYO (R) — Major industrialised nations made progress Saturday towards a pact to cut greenhouse gas emissions in the next century, but considerable gaps remain, British Deputy Prime Minister John Prescott said.

"We managed to narrow some of the differences and eliminate some of the problems — and they are still considerable, make no mistake about it," Mr. Prescott, who chaired a day of talks on the topic here, told reporters.

"We're now moving away from rhetoric onto the actual negotiations and the realities," he said.

Ministers from 13 developed nations and the European Union (EU) met Saturday as part of a final push ahead of a high-profile Dec. 1-10 climate conference in Kyoto, western Japan.

That is where nearly 170 signatories to a 1992 United Nations Climate Change Convention will try to hammer out binding targets for developed nations to cut greenhouse gas emissions in the next century.

Sunday, negotiators and ministers from eight developing nations will join the discussions, although China was not expected to attend while India had yet to reply to the invitation. Both are key players in the thorny debate.

Scientists say the buildup of carbon dioxide and other such gases in the atmosphere will alter the climate, causing more severe storms, droughts and floods and raising sea levels by melting part of the polar ice caps.

Negotiations to date have faltered on a host of problems including two key issues — how high should industrial nations set their own binding targets and how will poorer nations be brought into the global warming battle.

The EU has proposed an ambitious goal for industrial nations of 15 per cent cuts from 1990 levels by 2010.

The European plan has come under fierce attack from Japan, the United States and Australia, which say the target is unrealistic and a threat to the world economy.

Critics also charge Europe's proposal, which calls for the EU as a whole to meet a 15 per cent target while letting member states have variable goals, relies too heavily on cuts in Britain and Germany.

The United States, faced with an intense campaign by U.S. industry against binding targets, has proposed that developed countries stabilise their emissions at 1990 levels by 2010.

Washington also insists developed countries promise to cut their emissions, although it has been vague about when.

Japan, host to the December conference, has proposed a five per cent cut from 1990 levels as an average over the period from 2008 to 2012, but would let nations lower targets in certain cases and would not require targets to be fully binding.

Like Europe, however, Japan has said developing nations need not promise to make cuts at the Kyoto conference but should be persuaded to do so at a later date.

Developing nations argue industrialised nations should put their own houses in order before foisting targets on others.

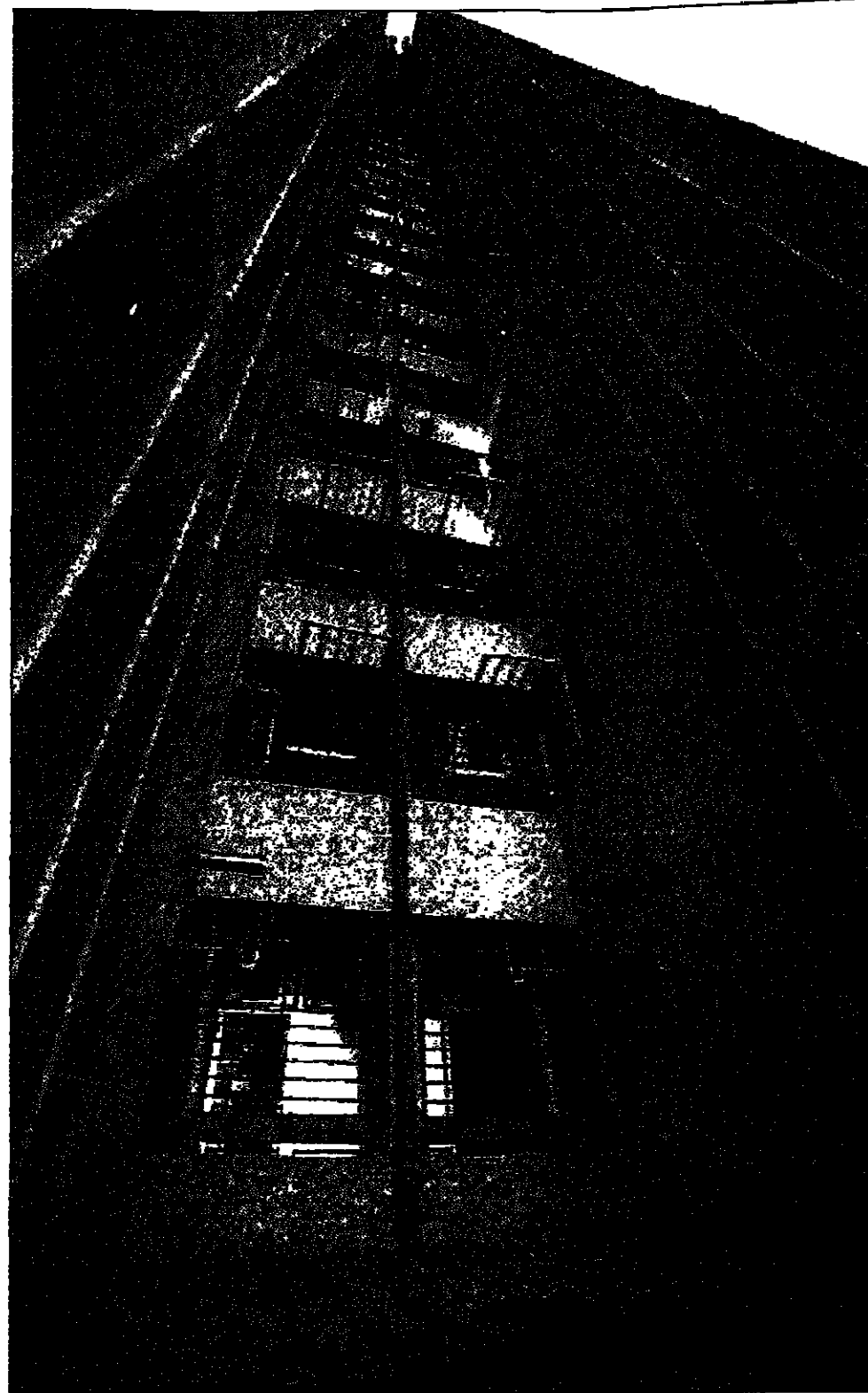
"They've made it very clear that they do feel that developed nations should first put their money on the table and show that they are prepared to take those essential steps, and that's what we are in the course of discussing," Mr. Prescott said.

He added that he would have a "positive statement" to make to the developing nations Sunday.

At the heart of this feud is developing nations' belief that industrialised economies want to derail their development with tough environmental standards that would strangle growth.

Despite the tough road ahead, however, Mr. Prescott expressed optimism over the outlook for Kyoto.

"If the mood and the political will is there, I'm sure we will be able to get agreement in Kyoto," he said.



The highrise apartment building in Hong Kong's Tseung Kwan O district, where three-year-old girl Lau Tim fell from a 13th-storey kitchen window and miraculously survived with only injuries to her shoulder (Reuters photo)

H. Kong toddler survives 13-storey fall

HONG KONG (AFP) — A three-year-old Hong Kong girl plunged 13 floors from an apartment window and suffered only minor injuries, a government spokesman said Saturday.

Tiny Lau Tim had been left sleeping in the family flat while her mother went shopping Friday.

Police said the girl was believed to have woken up and searched for her mother

before standing on a chair to see if she was outside.

Tim then toppled through an open window, bouncing off washing lines outside other apartments and landing on a metal canopy near the ground.

Residents found the girl crying on the floor and called an ambulance. She was listed as being in stable condition in hospital, suffering only a fractured

shoulder. Police said they had warned her parents that she should not be left alone but would not press charges.

The vast majority of Hong Kong's 6.5 million people live in high rise apartment blocks and people are regularly killed or injured here by falling from the buildings, whether accidentally or to commit suicide.

N. Korea lets Japanese wives visit long-lost homes

NARITA, Japan (R) — A group of 15 Japanese women, married to North Koreans but long barred from returning home, arrived Saturday for a week-long reunion with their families after waits of up to four decades.

The women, aged 55 to 84, are planning to visit their birthplaces, meet long-lost relatives and pay respects at their ancestors' graves.

An estimated 1,800 Japanese women moved with their spouses to North Korea between 1959 and 1982. Pyongyang had long refused to allow the women to visit Japan, and the issue had damaged relations between the two countries.

Most of the women, whose husbands are descendants of Koreans who moved or were brought to Japan before World War II, had not been heard from for years. "I was so happy I could

hardly sleep after I learned about my homecoming trip," said Kim Cho Me in Beijing, where the group made a brief stopover.

Japan, which ruled Korea as a colony from 1910 to 1945, established diplomatic relations with capitalist South Korea in 1965 but has yet to forge formal ties with the Communist North.

North Korea's decision in September to allow the women to visit was met by a Japanese offer to provide \$27 million worth of humanitarian aid to Pyongyang to stave off famine in the reclusive Communist state.

Tokyo had cited Pyongyang's refusal to allow the wives to visit Japan as one reason why it refused to send food aid to ease the famine threatening millions of North Koreans.

The women's visit also comes ahead of a Nov. 11-14 visit to Pyongyang by a joint delegation from the

ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), the Social Democratic Party and the Sakigake Party, partners in the Japanese government's loose coalition.

Japanese officials said Tokyo and Pyongyang were expected to restart the long-stalled process of normalising their relations.

The wives are not the only emotive issue impeding better relations, however. Japan alleges that North Korean agents on submarines have literally kidnapped Japanese people off the beaches and forced them to work in North Korea, often giving Japanese language lessons.

Eight rounds of talks on normalising relations ended abruptly in November 1992, when North Korea stormed out after Japan brought up the kidnapping allegations, which Pyongyang has always denied.

Hong Kong man nabbed for alleged Internet fraud

HONG KONG (AFP) — A Hong Kong man has been arrested for fraudulently ordering air tickets through the Internet, police said here Saturday.

The 24-year-old former student allegedly obtained credit card details from bills sent to staff and students at a common mail box at a university office, a spokesman added.

He then used their numbers to order tickets from travel agents on the Internet and had them sent to the same mail box, the spokesman said.

A raid on the man's flat Friday allegedly uncovered 12 air tickets valued at \$12,000 and details of other people's credit cards.

The fraud came to light

when two credit card holders reported they had been billed for plane tickets purchases they had not made.

Many credit card transactions are made on the Internet simply by providing numbers and personal details, though more secure procedures are being introduced.

British nanny awaits her fate

WASHINGTON (AP) — Along with tens of thousands of her allies on both sides of the Atlantic, British Louise Woodward awaits to see if she will get prison, a reduced sentence or possible freedom.

Support for the 19-year-old woman has grown since she was sentenced to life in prison last week for the murder of a Massachusetts baby.

Ms. Woodward's lawyers have asked Judge Zobel Tuesday to overturn the jury's decision, and he could decide as early as next week.

Deborah Eappen, 32, the mother of Matthew, eight months, who died of a skull fracture last February, called the intense support for Ms. Woodward "surreal."

She told the Boston Globe newspaper that in her opinion, "the jury was fair and just and brave" in its verdict, and that she has "no doubt" her child died from "child abuse" inflicted by Ms. Woodward.

"It truly frightens people to the core that someone who looks so normal ... could do this, so people refuse to believe it," she said. "It's easier to say that Debbie and Sunny Eappen did something wrong; they were mean to the girl; they overworked her. People write to us that ... I am at fault."

In England, where the press has widely denounced Ms. Woodward's sentence, her support group has received tens of thousands of dollars in donations and thousands of messages of sympathy by mail and E-mail.

Three soccer teams, including the famed Liverpool team, have joined the campaign for Ms. Woodward's freedom.

In the United States, where demonstrations demanding Ms. Woodward's release continue in front of the Massachusetts courthouses where she was sentenced, 60 per cent of 14,000 people who participated in a Boston television poll said Ms. Woodward was innocent and should be freed. Only 15 per cent said the judge should uphold the verdict.

The trial was broadcast on television and thousands of newspapers worldwide have covered her story. Hundreds of Internet sites are doing the same. One site, created last Sunday in England, has received tens of thousands of "hits", or visitors, since its inception.

"People can easily identify with this story. The subject of baby-sitters concerns them, and Louise Woodward is not a textbook criminal. They think she has been the victim of her lawyers' bad strategy," Jeffrey Reiman, an American University law expert, told AFP.

Friday, the American television channel Court TV began rebroadcasting the trial's highlights. They will continue running through Saturday and Sunday.

The verdict has had one direct consequence: the death sentence will not be reintroduced in Massachusetts this year. One vote was lacking to pass the law Thursday night in the state's house of representatives after Democrat John Slattery changed his mind.

He said that the controversy surrounding Ms. Woodward's sentence left him with a deeply unsettled conviction about the possibility of executing the wrong person.

Judge Zobel has up to 60 days to make up his mind. The defence wants him to free the young woman, call for a new trial or reduce the sentence to involuntary manslaughter, which could lead to her rapid release.

He will make the decision Monday at the earliest. To avoid "the media circus," he will make his decision public on the Internet and send it to selected media, who will immediately put it on their websites.

This procedure was denied in the United States where a judge's decision is usually made public in court.

Ailing Gorbachev reported better after care

GENEVA (R) — Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, dogged by illness during a visit to Switzerland this week, was Saturday reported much better and planning to fly home Sunday.

A spokeswoman for the environmental Green Cross international organisation, over which he presides, said Mr. Gorbachev was still at his hotel in Bern, where doctors have been treating him for an allergy problem.

The affliction prevented him from attending a gala dinner in Zurich Friday at which he planned to promote his campaign for better protection of the global environment.

Earlier in the week the 66-year-old Mr. Gorbachev — whose reforms of the old Soviet system helped bring about the collapse of Communist rule — had undergone two days of extensive medical tests at a hospital in Bern, the Swiss capital.

"He seems a lot better, he still intends to leave tomorrow," Geneva-based Green Cross spokeswoman Sophie Barley told Reuters. He was expected to fly back to Moscow from Zurich.

The Friday benefit dinner in the Swiss financial centre was to have been his last scheduled public event during a week-long trip to Switzerland, which has an active national chapter of his organisation.

A Swiss Green Cross official said the tests he had undergone during the week had weakened him.

Mr. Gorbachev, once both Communist Party chief and president of the Soviet Empire covering one sixth of the globe, was forced to step down in December 1991 when leaders of the republics which made up the apparently mighty superpower decided to break it up.

Since then, he has sunk into political oblivion at home — scorned by both liberals who saw him as a half-hearted reformer and by millions of people who blame him for the end of a system that provided them with basic social security.

But he has travelled widely abroad promoting green causes, arguing that mankind could be heading for disaster unless more attention is paid to environmental degradation. He is due to visit Japan later this month.

He is still widely respected outside Russia for his role in ending the cold war, for which he won the Nobel Peace Prize.

A spokesman for Mr. Gorbachev said two days ago that he had suffered unspecified allergic reactions from time to time over the past few months that caused skin irritation.

"Perhaps it is from water or food, but we need to find out from what," the spokesman, Vladimir Polyakov, told reporters. "Other than this, he does not have any (health) problems."

Mr. Gorbachev was forced to miss a benefit dinner Thursday in Basel when his allergies flared up, causing his face to swell, only hours after he checked out of a Bern hospital following two days of tests.

He had appeared fit and cracked jokes as he left Bern's Inselspital hospital Thursday after checks that ran longer than expected. "The rumours that I am dying have ended," he told reporters.

Winds blow Indonesia haze away from neighbours

JAKARTA (R) — Winds from a tropical depression in the South China Sea are blowing smog from Indonesian fires away from neighbouring Singapore and Malaysia, official data showed Saturday.

Satellite data released by the Indonesian Environmental Impact Management Agency (Bapedal) also showed 15 "hot spots", areas where fires are generally burning, in Kalimantan, the Indonesian side of Borneo Island, Friday evening.

Six hot spots were recorded in Southern Sumatra.

The Bapedal report, compiled from data from the National Meteorological Agency (BMG), Disaster Coordination Centre and National Space and Aeronautics Agency (LAPAN), showed winds at 1,000 metres blowing from the northwest from the South China Sea at up to 35 kilometres per hour.

The winds from Kalimantan, where large amounts of smoke linger, blew in the direction of Southern Sumatra rather than Singapore and Malaysia. Satellite photographs showed large amounts of smoke from Sumatra drifting over the Indian Ocean.

Visibility reports from the regions showed smoke still a problem in a number of areas even though the fires in these districts had been extinguished.

The worse report came from the city of Jambi on Sumatra Island where visibility was less than 100 metres Friday evening and between 100-700 metres in the Kerinci district, also in Jambi province.

Visibility at the key Indonesian airports of Jakarta, Medan in North Sumatra and Denpasar on Bali was above five km, but regional airports in Jambi and Palembang on Sumatra as well as Palangkaraya on Kalimantan were closed because of the haze.

Khmer Rouge voice support for Cambodian peace

PHNOM PENH (R) — The chief spokesman of Cambodia's Khmer Rouge guerrilla group Saturday said he supported a call by King Norodom Sihanouk for a peaceful settlement to the nation's political conflict.

Khieu Samphan, president of the political arm of the Khmer Rouge, said in a message to the king on the rebels' clandestine radio that he stood behind King Sihanouk's most recent appeal for peace earlier this week.

"I just received the king's statement from Nov. 4 which appealed to all Cambodians to make a national peace settlement," said the message read by an announcer on the radio, the Khmer Rouge's propaganda mouthpiece.

"This is the wish of all Cambodians inside the country as well as overseas. I totally support the king's proposal," it said.

It did not elaborate on what steps the rebels

would take to pursue peace.

King Sihanouk has repeatedly called on his subjects to cease fighting and reconcile since powerful second Prime Minister Hun Sen deposed the monarch's son, former first Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh, on July 6.

Fighting has continued since July in pockets of the country's north and west, where Prince Ranariddh's rag-tag army has allied with Khmer Rouge guerrillas, architects of the 1975-79 "killing fields" regime, to fight Hun Sen's government forces.

In his statement, Khieu Samphan, the French-educated former head of state during the Khmer Rouge regime and public face of the rebels, said the recent fighting was "aimed at peace, maintaining territory and protecting future generations."

More than a million Cambodians died of dis-

ease, starvation, hard labour or were executed as enemies of the Maoist-style Khmer Rouge revolution until their regime was toppled by an invading Vietnamese army in early 1979.

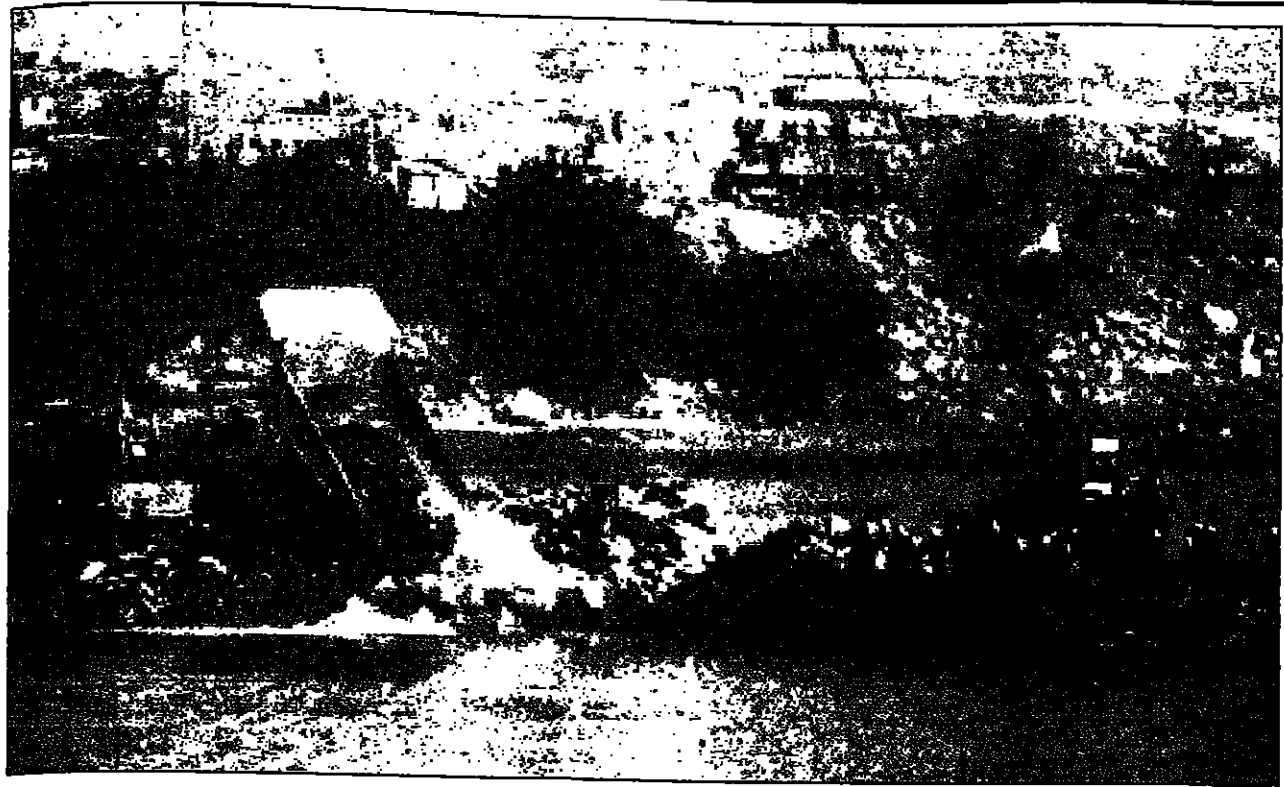
Pol Pot, the long-time leader of the movement, was ousted in mid-June following a bloody split among the group's top leadership and was placed under house arrest by his former comrades in late July.

Prince Ranariddh and Khmer Rouge leaders say the group has completely changed since Pol Pot's demise, but Hun Sen has called that assertion a trick.

The shaky coalition of Prince Ranariddh and Hun Sen began falling apart last year when the two leaders vied for the allegiance of defecting Khmer Rouge soldiers. Prince Ranariddh was on the verge of a peace deal with the remaining rebels when he was overthrown.

British nanny awaits her fate

WASHINGTON (AP) — Along with tens of thousands of other British citizens, the British nanny, who was accused of murdering a young girl, is waiting for her fate to be decided by a court in the United States.



Water splashes out as giant lorries dump one of the last truckloads of rocks into the Yangtze River at the so-called Dragon Mouth of Sandouping, central Hubei province (Reuter photo)

China blocks Yangtze for controversial dam

SANDOUPING, China (R) — Firecrackers exploded over the Yangtze Saturday as China blocked the main channel of the world's third longest river to begin work on the mammoth and controversial Three Gorges Dam.

China is trumpeting its success at stemming the river's mighty flow with two temporary stone and earth dams as proof of its technical prowess.

It says the project will fuel industrial growth in the country's Yangtze heartland.

But critics maintain the dam is an environmental nightmare.

One billion tonnes of industrial and human waste will flow into the dam's giant reservoir, and there are fears that reduced water flow will turn the lake into a giant cesspool.

Detractors also charge that the forced relocation of 1.2 million residents is a human rights disaster and say countless archaeological treasures will be lost forever in a watery grave.

Officials insist they have addressed all concerns, saying jobs will be found for the displaced masses and environmental damage will be minimal.

President Jiang Zemin and Premier Li Peng stood on the Yangtze's banks as a giant earthmover dumped the last load of stone and gravel to fill a small gap and complete the second of two temporary dams that now form a giant enclosure.

"The blocking has been successful," said Mr. Li, the Chinese leader most closely associated with the project to create the world's mightiest hydropower station.

The dam is aimed at slaking China's growing thirst for electricity and taming the killer floods of the Yangtze, the world's third longest river behind the Nile and Amazon.

When completed in 12 years, the dam will pump out 18,200 megawatts of electricity from its 26 generators, each one equal to a medium-sized nuclear reactor.

Mr. Jiang called the blockage a major milestone on a project that will stretch to the year 2009 and is officially forecast to cost \$29 billion.

"The age-old dream of the Chinese people to develop and utilise the resources of the Yangtze has come closer to being true," Mr. Jiang said at the ceremony.

Revolutionary leader Sun Yat-sen first proposed building the dam in 1919, but daunting technical and social problems kept the plan on the drawing boards for more than 60 years.

Chinese leaders are clearly concerned that the mass relocation of 1.2 million people could spark social unrest.

"A successful resettlement of the people affected by the (dam) is a key to the progress and eventual success of the project," Mr. Jiang said at the river bank ceremony.

The official Xinhua news agency said work on the temporary dam had stopped briefly late Saturday morning when part of one wall slid slightly.

Water will now be pumped out from the enclosure to create a dry crater from which the towering concrete walls of the 175-metre permanent dam will rise.

The temporary dam walls — one upstream and the other downstream — are an ambitious project in themselves, requiring 11 million cubic metres of rubble.

They must be further raised and widened before next year's flood season begins in May, when water levels could rise another 20 metres.

Workers did not completely block the Yangtze, as a diversion channel was dug to allow cargo and passenger ships to ply the river. Once the dam is completed, a shiplock and a shiplift will allow vessels to pass.

Sri Lankan peace hopes dim as Tigers reject political deal

COLOMBO (AFP) — Sri Lanka's hopes of an early end to dragging ethnic bloodshed have dimmed after Tamil Tiger guerrillas formally rejected a radical power-sharing peace plan. Tamil sources here said Saturday.

The separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) described as a "political conspiracy" a proposal by the Colombo government that seeks to turn the country into a de facto federal state in exchange for peace.

Tamil sources quoted the latest October issue of the official organ of the rebels, the Viduthalaipuligal or Liberation Tiger, as saying that the government's devolution plan failed to recognise a "Tamil nation."

The LTTE, which was labelled a "foreign terrorist organisation" by the U.S. State Department last month, had earlier opposed the devolution plan but the latest announcement was

the most direct rejection, Tamil sources said.

The Tigers said their battle against security forces was comparable to a war between the armies of two countries. The Tigers are demanding the establishment of an independent state called Eelam in the northeast.

The government plan envisages granting greater autonomy to minorities in exchange for ethnic peace.

President Chandrika Kumaratunga who initiated the power-sharing plan in August 1995 has offered to talk with the rebels over political arrangements but there has been no response from the LTTE.

Two days after a huge truck bombing in the capital Colombo last month, Ms. Kumaratunga said she was willing to talk "even with the devil" on her political package.

The government plan is expected to be taken up in parliament early next year after the legislature concludes a debate on the national budget.

Under the radical political plan, the government seeks to set up regional councils which will have greater authority over land, law and order and the ability to negotiate and receive direct foreign funding.

The ruling party lacks the mandatory two-thirds majority in parliament to realise the reforms and is dependent on the main opposition United National Party (UNP) which has said it will oppose any move to divide the country.

The opposition has said that there should be talks with the LTTE to effectively implement the peace plan otherwise there will be no end to the ongoing violence, particularly in the north-east of the country.

An almost daily death toll is reported from the embattled region. Saturday, Tiger guerrillas attacked a police post at Poovarasankulam in the north, killing five constables, defence officials said.

They said another soldier was killed further north Friday while troops shot dead two Tiger rebels elsewhere in the east on the same day.

Government forces are currently engaged in their biggest ever ground offensive against the LTTE in a bid to open a key land route to the northern peninsula of Jaffna.

Junior Defence Minister Anuruddha Ratwatte last month said the military had entered a "final phase" of its operations against the LTTE and was hopeful of making the rebels a "phenomena of the past."

More than 50,000 people have been killed in the drawn out conflict in the past 25 years and previous political and military attempts to address minority issues and the Tigers have ended in failure.

Napalmed girl seen in 1972 photo wants to help other child victims

CHICAGO (AP) — The Vietnamese woman who was photographed as a 9-year-old fleeing a 1972 U.S. napalm attack that seared her body is launching a foundation to help innocent young victims of war.

"I want to give back all the love and care that I have received over the years from so many people. So this can be a way for me to help people," 34-year-old Phan Thi Kim Phuc said Friday.

The Kim Foundation is still in the beginning stages, and it has not yet been determined exactly what it will do to help children around the world.

On June 8, 1972, a fleeing Phuc was photographed, naked and screaming, after a U.S. air strike turned her village north of Saigon into a cauldron of flames. Two of her brothers and two cousins were killed. The flames had burned her clothing off.

Associated Press Photographer Nick Ut won a Pulitzer Prize for the photo, one of the widely known images of the war.

"I really think this picture stopped the war and changed the war," Ms. Phuc said.

Ms. Phuc was in and out of hospitals for years, underwent 17 operations and still feels pain from the wounds.

She is now married, with two sons, and lives in Toronto.

Vietnam sends Mayday for typhoon 'calamity'

HANOI (R) — Vietnam urged its neighbours Saturday to join search and rescue operations for hundreds of fishermen who went missing after Typhoon Linda pounded the country's southern tip and waters last weekend.

Branding the storm "a calamity of the century," the Foreign Ministry told a news conference that it had appealed to embassies and international organisations in Hanoi for help with a disaster which has left tens of thousands homeless.

It also passed on a request from the Central Committee for Flood and Storm Control (CCFSC) for neighbouring countries such as Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines to join its armada of vessels looking for survivors.

The CCFSC said that by early Friday afternoon, 304 people had been confirmed dead and 1,937 were still missing.

However, a Reuters tally of figures from 14 provinces affected by Linda's violent winds and torrential rain put the number of lives lost at 455 and the missing at over 2,500.

So far more than 3,500 people, many of whom clung to buoys or broken boat planks for days, have been plucked from the sea by patrolling ships or helicopters.

However, a disaster expert in Hanoi, who declined to be named, said more than half of those still unaccounted for would probably have died already.

The U.N.-sponsored Disaster Management Unit said the estimated cost of emergency food, medicine, clothing, shelter and sanitation needs in just four of the worst-hit provinces was \$12.03 million.

A local newspaper Friday said the storm, which damaged or flooded 226,000 hectares of ricefields with salt-water and wrecked 64,500 houses, caused an economic loss of some \$400 million.

The United Nations said in statement that four of its agencies had made preliminary pledges of aid for Linda's victims totalling \$255,000, most of it to assist the CCFSC in damage reporting, needs assessment and aid coordination.

Bilateral aid donations totalling \$507,000 have rolled in from Switzerland, South Korea and Australia, while local organisations — including the police, the post and telecommunications agency, the railway union and a bank — have sent money to the victims.

Vietnam is one of the most disaster-prone countries in the world, suffering river flooding, flash floods and typhoons between June and December every year.

However, the heavily-populated area which was buffeted by Linda last Sunday is not normally prone to typhoons and had not suffered anything on that scale since 1904.

Marshall Silver, chief technical advisor of flood mitigation for the United Nations development programme in Vietnam, told the Foreign Ministry news conference the typhoon developed rapidly, leaving little time to warn fishermen out at sea.

The typhoon tracked west after hitting Vietnam, killing at least 34 people in Cambodia and Thailand. However, figures provided by officials in those countries Thursday showed that at least 180, mostly fishermen, were still missing.

Late Friday the typhoon was centred 400 kilometres north of Port Blair, the capital of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, in the bay of Bengal and was moving northwards.

A senior government meteorologist in Calcutta said the storm may miss India and veer towards Burma and Bangladesh.

Grandmother's torture lessons influence murderer

SYDNEY (R) — The grandmother of a double murderer played a pivotal role in his early criminal development, buying him kittens and teaching him how to torture them by cutting off their ears and tails during his school holidays, an Australian court was told.

Richard Leonard, 24, was convicted of murdering one man by shooting him through the heart with a bow and arrow and has pleaded guilty to stabbing a second man 37 times before slitting his throat.

A forensic psychiatrist said Mr. Leonard might have lost the ability to adapt to the needs and sufferings of both animals and humans at an early age, the Australian newspaper reported Saturday.

Mr. Leonard's deeply religious father told the court he had spoken to his mother not long before her death and that she had confirmed his son's story about the cats.

German scientist said granted asylum in U.S.

NEW YORK (R) — A U.S. immigration court judge has granted asylum to a visiting German member of the Church of Scientology who claimed she would be subjected to religious persecution on return home, the New York Times reported in its Saturday editions.

The newspaper quoted a Scientology official and the unnamed woman's lawyer as saying the immigration judge, who was not identified, approved her application to remain in the United States after a February hearing.

Officials at the U.S. State Department and the Immigration and Naturalisation Service in Washington said they were unaware of the case, the Times reported.

German embassy officials in Washington were also unaware of the asylum decision, the newspaper said.

It said while few details of the case were available, it was believed to be the first time the United States had given asylum protection to a Scientology member. The Church of Scientology has been waging a highly public international campaign against what it considers discrimination against its members by the German government.

The Church of Scientology in a news release Saturday said the woman was granted asylum because she "made a clear and convincing showing of a well-founded fear of persecution by the German government solely because of her religious belief."

The church said the woman had asked that her identity or domicile not be revealed because "she fears that relatives, who still live in Germany, will become targets of harassment and abuse by the German government."

Australian police baffled by object from sky

PERTH, Australia (AFP) — Police in Western Australia admitted they were baffled Saturday after a small egg-shaped canister apparently fell from the sky onto a farm before exploding.

Police Inspector Dennis Perich said it had been established that the object, which fell on the small town of Muchea, 35 kilometres from here was not space debris or radioactive.

"Investigations into what the object is and where it may have come from are continuing," he said.

"The canister has disintegrated, but the farmer was able to take a sample of the liquid oozing from the canister."

"He described it as a green, bubbling fluid."

Mr. Perich said a radiation management group and health authorities were working with police in a bid to solve the mystery.

Police have not revealed the exact location of the farm or the name of the farmer.

Death in Geneva becomes too dear

GENEVA (AFP) — For Geneva's public purse, dying has become too dear. To reduce its debt, the municipality has decided to cut back on funerals, which it has provided free of charge to all comers since the beginning of the century. The tradition was rooted in the idea that every citizen of this Calvinist city should be equal in death, giving the poorest as much a right to a dignified funeral as a millionaire.

But tradition has died its own death following a landmark decision by the municipal council at the beginning of October.

Henceforth, only proper Geneva residents have the right to a free burial or cremation, eliminating at a stroke people living elsewhere and building owners whose white-cross passports formally list them as citizens of Geneva.

Every Swiss at birth becomes automatically a citizen of the country and of the commune to which his parents are linked, even though the person may not have been born, or may never have lived in the town or village marked in his travelling papers.

With the new ruling, Geneva has joined the ranks of most Swiss cities that offer no-charge and often no-frills funerals to their residents, believing they have the right as taxpayers to benefit from a final social service.

"In Geneva, a political decision was made for economic reasons," said Jean-Claude Schaulin, chief of the municipal funeral parlour.

The new restrictions will cut services by about one third, or the equivalent of 300 to 400 deceased persons per year, and produce savings of at least 350,000 Swiss francs (\$230,000), he said.

Which is just a drop in the bucket given the city's 60 million Swiss franc debt.

"Because of being in the red, corners have to be cut everywhere," said Jean Murith, director of a leading mortician which has been active in Geneva for 110 years.

Mr. Murith is not complaining however, since his business is set to conquer new niches as a result of the measure which was debated for 25 years before being put into place.

Geneva's largesse, abused in certain cases, previously extended to those living in garden-ringed villas in the poshest areas facing the lake, which Mr. Murith openly objects to.

"It's appalling to want to save a few pennies when burying your parents. It's said that the manner in which the dead are laid to rest reveals the soul of a society." Many of the well-heeled in town will now have to foot the bills for their loved ones' burials though actual Geneva residents will still enjoy a free service no matter how rich they are.

The municipality offers a complete, but simple service ranging from provision of the coffin to cremation.

If relatives want something more dramatic or personalised, they have the option of enlisting a private firm and foregoing the city's bounty.

Up to now, no one has complained about the service, Mr. Schaulin said.

Powerful earthquake strikes China's Tibet region

BEDING (R) — A powerful earthquake hit a remote area of China's mountainous Tibet region Saturday, but there were no immediate reports of casualties, officials said.

Chinese seismologists originally said the quake measured 7.9 on the Richter Scale, but later revised that to 7.5. They did not explain the adjustment.

Geologists in the United States and Japan both put the quake at 7.9, saying it was believed to be the largest instrumentally recorded in the area.

The quake, among the strongest to strike China, had its epicentre at 35.2 degrees north, 87.3 degrees east, an official with the State Seismological Bureau said.

That is about 700 kilometres northwest of the Tibetan capital of Lhasa, near the Himalayan area's border with China's Xinjiang region, where several earthquakes this year have killed about 50 people.

"There is no news of any deaths or injuries," the official said by telephone.

At the U.S. geological survey in Golden, Colorado, geophysicist Stewart Koyanagi said: "This earthquake is really big. I am sure there have been bigger ones in that area, but we don't have any recorded larger than today's."

An official with the Tibet Seismological Bureau said authorities were checking to see if there were any casualties or damage.

"That is a really remote place. There aren't many people out there," the Tibet official said.

Tibet is home to about 2.3 million people, many of them yak and sheep herders.

An earthquake measuring 5.6 on the Richter scale struck an area of southern Tibet Monday. No injuries were reported in that tremor.

Experts say China is passing through a period of high seismicological activity and reports of moderate tremors are common, although many occur in sparsely populated areas.

China suffered the worst earthquake in modern history in 1976, when a tremor measuring 7.8 on the Richter scale levelled the northern city of Tangshan, killing at least 240,000 people.

The most devastating earthquake in recorded history hit China's northwestern Shaanxi province in 1556, killing an estimated 830,000 people.

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One of the few and more forceful scholars dissented from Huntington's thesis from an entirely new perspective. This was Professor Reza Sheikholeslami of Wadham College Oxford, who argued that a clash may come but not because of the inherent differences between the Western and Islamic worlds but because of their many and growing similarities. "We want the same things, independence and economic prosperity." But in this "unipolar world" the U.S. refuses to share power and wealth. Thus, the campaign of underprivileged Muslims who adopt political means to achieve power, status and development, becomes a threat to the U.S. and militant Muslims, "terrorists." Thus, he concluded, the more the "have-nots subscribe to the value systems of the haves, the more threatened do the haves feel." This is true also of other competing "civilisations" than the West and Islam and of relations between rich and poor within most societies.

Features

Flexible law: How Israel bends rules to suit changing needs

By Peretz Kidron
in West Jerusalem

ISRAEL IS indeed, as apologists claim, a "law-abiding" state; but as much as denoting compliance with rigid rules, the term also refers to the enormous ingenuity exercised in bending those rules to changing needs. A glaring example is the case of 17-year-old Samuel Sheinbein. Under legislation instigated by the late Menachem Begin, Israel cannot extradite to a foreign country any person who was an Israeli citizen at the time of the commission of the crime for which he is pursued. The only legal recourse is to try him for the alleged crime before an Israeli court, any sentence to be served in an Israeli prison.

In view of the unambiguous wording of the Israeli law, it looked initially as though the American extradition request had no hope of success — until U.S. congressmen, apparently driven by the public outcry, decided to take a hand in the affair with unabashed threats of delaying or even freezing Israel's annual aid package. The earnestness of the threat was illustrated when a preliminary remission of \$75 million was stalled in congressional committee.

This form of congressional action came as an unpleasant shock in Israel: traditionally, Congress has always been the section of the American political establishment where Israel exercises the greatest clout. Whenever Israeli governments have found themselves in confrontation with the administration, the first reaction of the Israeli embassy in Washington is to recruit friends on Capitol Hill to temper presidential reaction. Finding Congress in the unusual role of arm-twister was, therefore, an ominous development. It was not the immediate stoppage of aid: with foreign reserves of close on \$20 billion and high credit ratings on world financial markets, Israel could easily survive a hopefully brief delay in getting its annual U.S. aid package.

But there is deep concern over the precedent: should the Americans realise how potent the leverage they could exercise on Israel, it might cross their minds to exert similar pressure on matters like the peace process, or Israeli arms sales and other business deals with third parties conflicting with U.S. interests. Urgent cables from the Washington embassy begged for prompt action to ward off the threat.

The matter was now up to cabinet legal adviser Amnon Rubinstein, who plays a key role in approving extradition proceedings. It is unclear whether Rubinstein got explicit instructions from his government bosses: such matters are usually resolved with greater subtlety. Although nominally independent of the political echelons, Rubinstein has long functioned as their pliant and obedient tool: when it became plain to all that denial of the extradition request could have grave repercussions for Israel's relations with its American patrons, there was probably no need for further prompting. After thorough study of the documents, Rubinstein and his team of state attorneys claimed to have found evidence that the murder suspect's father — despite holding an Israeli identity card, despite his military service with the IDF and his subsequent annual registration for reserve duties — is not, after all, an Israeli citizen, and his son is therefore

eligible for extradition.

That finding does not mean that the young man will be handed over automatically, or at an early date. His family have hired former justice minister David Libai to argue their case, and Libai promises to appeal all the way up to the Supreme Court. It could take months or even years before a final decision is reached. But the Israeli government achieved its immediate aim of placating congressional ire with a suitable demonstration of goodwill. If that end has been attained by crude manipulation of Israeli law, nobody seems particularly perturbed. Anything to avoid a head-on confrontation with the Americans.

A similarly gratifying outcome laid to rest another case with an equal potential for political damage. The charge was attempted rape, the plaintiff an Israeli belly-dancer, her alleged assailant: Mohammad Basyuni, Egyptian ambassador to Israel. Needless to say, had the charges been pursued, it would have added a further and undesirable embarrassment to Israeli-Egyptian relations, already bedevilled by conflicting interests, mutual mistrust and disagreements over the peace process. Diplomatic custom would not tolerate a criminal investigation against a serving ambassador: had the case gone any further, Egypt would have been forced to recall Basyuni. Given the current state of bilateral relations, such a step could have entailed a full-scale rupture, further aggravating Israel's isolation in the region.

But such grave consequences were kept from materialising when Israel's legal system again demonstrated its political savvy, again — allegedly — without any nudging from the political echelons. After a two-month investigation kept from the public by a blanket court order forbidding any media publication, State Attorney Edna Arbel held a televised press conference where she dismissed the woman's charges as groundless, arguing Basyuni had done nothing worse than make a rather vigorous pass at her, without force or coercion.

Arbel noted with prudish disapproval that the dancer went to see the ambassador "scantly clad." The implication that the dancer had "asked for it" naturally infuriated feminists, but with such major national interests at stake, that was a minor irritant. Israeli officials apologised to Basyuni for the harassment he had endured, including vociferous picketing by racist hardliners, and the ambassador gracefully declared the episode closed.

Courtship dances

Arbel's prim comments on "The Case of the Ambassador and the Belly-Dancer" may have been influenced by quasi-sexual conduct dominating the domestic political arena. Inter-party relations increasingly resemble a ritual dance, where various groups and figures swoop and turn in complex advances and retreats, clicking heels and twirling fans in a mysterious courtship ritual. At the focus stands Benjamin Netanyahu, one moment drawing the dancers with irresistible force, the next scattering them in panic-stricken flight. The dancers weave to and fro, looking around for new partners, dodging, twisting and teasing — only to return to the inescapable Netanyahu.

With the possible exception of Golda Meir in the immediate wake of the 1973 Yom Kippur war, no prime minister has ever been held in



Benjamin Netanyahu, a Likud Party leader and member of the Knesset, gestures to deputies during a 1994 debate in the Israeli parliament (AFP photo)

such unconcealed contempt as Netanyahu. Surrounded by endless scandal and controversy, under a constant media barrage, mistrusted by his ministers and coalition partners — Netanyahu seems to have little hope of survival to the end of his four-year term.

Under other circumstances, his foes and critics from the coalition would have allied themselves with the opposition to vote him from office. But that has yet to happen: Israel's first directly elected prime minister is legally immune to anything but the most powerful onslaught. Furthermore, any move to topple him could threaten cherished partisan interests.

Torn between these conflicting forces, the coalition parties seek a "safe" middle way whereby Netanyahu would be rendered harmless, without damage to themselves or the interests they represent. The most obvious path is a "government of national unity" with the opposition Labour Party joining the present coalition and receiving key portfolios, to act as a restraining influence. Even if moves to that end ultimately prove fruitless, the various coalition factions are careful to cover their bets, hoping that their overtures in that direction will improve their status within the administration and bring them some minor gains whereby they could reassure constituents that sticking with Netanyahu has paid off.

The result is a never-ending procession of politicians coming and going for meetings simultaneously informal and well publicised. An intimate of Foreign Minister David Levy has dinner with a senior Labour figure: both deny any political intent, but rumours are promptly launched that Levy and his followers are being offered a number of safe slots on the Labour slate if they walk out on the present coalition. Levy adds his muscle with equally well reported "unofficial" declarations of disgust with Netanyahu. This manoeuvring may foreshadow a Levy walk-out: equally, he could decide after all to stay in the government if he is offered concessions, whether in the form of jobs for his followers or "social" concessions in the upcoming 1998 budget.

On another front, the internal security minister, Avigdor Kahalani, holds sporadic meetings with the Labour leadership, unabashedly promoting efforts by his Third Way party to instigate a national unity government. Here too, the feelers could presage the party's return to the ranks of Labour — or hopes of leverage against its religious rivals in the present government.

For its part, the Labour opposition is going all-out to woo coalition parties in the hope of ejecting Netanyahu before the year 2000. Labour leader Ehud Barak has failed hitherto

to make much of an impact with public opinion, but he is steadfastly pursuing his strategy of attacking Likud bastions in the Mizrahi middle class. Having publicly apologised on behalf of the Labour leadership "throughout the generations" for the humiliations to which the Labour governments of the 1950s subjected Middle Eastern immigrants, Barak is making all-out efforts to avoid clashes with the religious parties, whose pivotal position could decide the next election.

Shas' cross flirting

His particular objective is the Orthodox Shas Party, whose blend of religious piety with social ardour in defence of these communities has elevated it into a powerful and growing electoral force. At the recently concluded festival of Succoth, Barak visited Shas spiritual mentor Rabbi Ovadia Yosef, scheduled as a brief courtesy call according to the festive custom, the visit extended into long and earnest conversation which promptly set the political community abuzz with rumour.

Nobody can rival Shas and its dynamic lay leader, Aryeh Deri, in taking advantage of such a situation. Deri knows that a Shas walk-out would bring down the Netanyahu government, and he knows that Netanyahu knows it. Equally, he knows that Barak knows he has no hope of gaining power at the next election without Shas' support. With two such eligible swains competing for its favours, no wonder that Shas is behaving like a cross flirt, flinging smiles first in one direction, then the other — and hastening to submit the reckoning. The dowry demanded includes a couple of religious laws that Netanyahu and Barak are each reluctant to grant, for fear that the provisions consolidating Orthodox control of religious life in Israel will offend the powerful Reform and Conservative movements in the U.S.

But while the two modernist movements exercise considerable clout in the Jewish diaspora, they dispose of very few votes in Israel itself. In consequence, bets are on that the controversial legislation — or some equivalent — will ultimately be carried through the Knesset by a bizarre coalition of Likud and Labour, while Shas and the other Orthodox parties sit back beaming. And of course, the Netanyahu government will come through unscathed.

President Ezer Weizman has put off an official visit to China, scheduled for December. The postponement was on unspecified "political grounds." Weizman aides told journalists that the president has two main reasons for wishing to remain in Israel at that time: to secure his reelection for a second term; and to be on hand for the collapse of the Netanyahu government which he expects at the end of the year. Political observers recognise Weizman's legitimate concern at holding on to his present office. But insofar as being around to witness Netanyahu's downfall, many observers believe he may find himself kicking his heels to no purpose. For all its apparent fragility, the Netanyahu government has more staying power than meets the eye. The present courtship dance could easily extend till the year 2000, or even further.

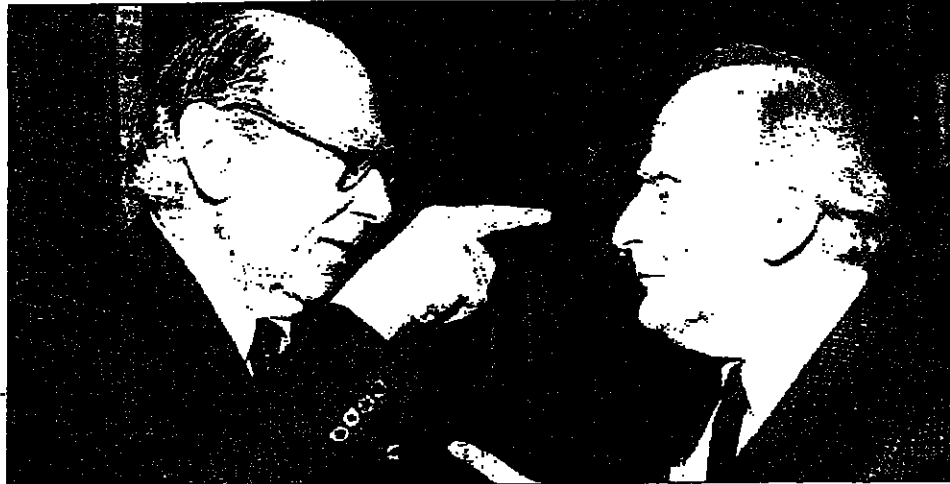
Middle East International

Britain's greatest thinker, who straddled a terrible century

EVEN WITHOUT the academic accomplishments which adorned it, Isaiah Berlin was a life that encapsulated a century — from an early childhood in Riga and St. Petersburg to England and Oxford, to Washington and then back to Moscow as a diplomat, then Oxford once more, and the summits of the English establishment as a director of the Royal Opera House, and the presidency of the British Academy.

But he will be best remembered for two things: his scholarship and his ability to communicate his scholarship. In Berlin three strands wondrously fused; a Russian fascination with ideas, a sense of community derived from his Jewish origins, and a devotion to tolerance, the dignity of the individual, and freedom taken from his adopted country of England. And for those who knew him and studied under him, his finest pulpit was the lecture rooms of postwar Oxford.

Isaiah Berlin was the university's in-house legend, a Pavarotti at the rostrum of learning, a multilingual, multidisciplinary force of nature. For those who listened to him, the memory is indelible — the glittering, tumbling torrent of words as speech struggled to keep up with the Catherine wheel of ideas that was his mind. He was once measured at 400 words a minute, twice the normal rate. Whether it was total enlightenment or inspired obfuscation was debatable: "Unintelligible in several languages," Al Rowse once remarked, only



The life of Isaiah Berlin, pictured with Sir Yehudi Menuhin (right), encapsulated a century, from the Russian revolution to the fall of the Berlin Wall (AP photos)

part in jest. But the sheer sweep and wit of the man, the richness and originality of his mind, made you feel, if only for an instant, that suddenly everything was clear.

Berlin has not escaped revisionism's barbs. For today's philosophy students he is no longer required reading. So, some start to wonder, was he really a unique genius? Or was he

merely an inflated Oxford cult figure, a Grade One listed monument of the high table, unique only in that gift the English intelligentsia prize above every other — of holding forth at the drop of a hat, effortlessly, authoritatively and humorously, about any subject, under the sun? He could do that — and how. But he was not just clever. He was also wise.

He offered a remarkable combination of historian and philosopher, a student of ideas who also shaped ideas. Berlin is famous above all as a liberal. You did not have to be an aspiring historian or philosopher to have read his 1959 essay "Two Concepts of Liberty" and be disquieted and enthralled by the distinction drawn between "freedom from" and "freedom to" —

the one the justificatory claim of the Communist which he loathed, the other all too easily a licence to tyrannise.

Today, the "Two Concepts" is less admired, and Berlin himself admitted in his last published interview, in last month's issue of Prospect magazine, that "I should have made more of the horrors of negative liberty, and all that has led to."

No one, however, would challenge the central lesson he drew from "this most terrible century in Western history," that nothing was as dangerous as blind pursuit of a political or philosophical system. He had seen these evils at first hand: the overthrow of Tsar Nicholas II and Lenin's coup, as a child in St. Petersburg, and the ebb and flow of the World War II from the

British embassy in Washington. Famously, his dispatches were some of Churchill's favourite wartime reading.

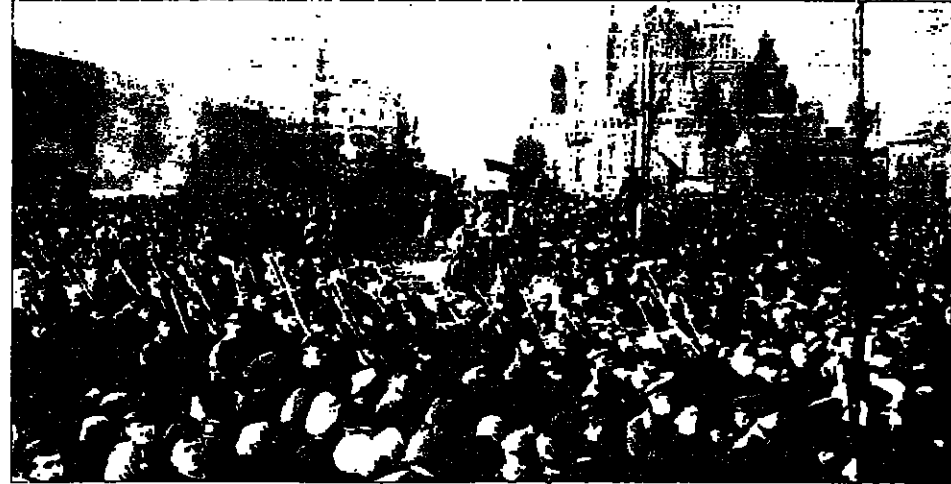
Above all, perhaps, he recognised that in an imperfect world good was divisible, that noble intentions often conflicted, that the most intractable disputes are where both contestants are right. From that flowed a special skill, of illuminat-

ing each side of an argument. He was a mesmerising raconteur — but "at the opposite extreme from those... who use their gifts to monopolise the conversation," wrote the philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre. "Berlin's splendid performances enable us to listen more intelligently to other voices, not just to his own. How much we owe him."

How much indeed. More conclusively than any other, he proved that playfulness, laughter and a sense of fun could survive a fellowship of All Souls at the age of 23. He was, wrote his biographer, Michael Ignatieff, "the rarest of creatures, a wise man who is also lovable."

All this will make him irreplaceable. Each generation throws up just a handful like him: Andre Malraux, George Kennan, John Maynard Keynes are a few names which come to mind.

We should be thankful that this particularly coruscating specimen fetched up on our shores. England, he once said, "is the best country in the world: the least corrupt, the least cruel, the least liable to enormities." Pace the trumpeting of New Labour, these days this self-doubting country tends not to see itself so. Let us therefore return the compliment. Berlin's favourite quotation is a line by Immanuel Kant: "From the crooked timber of humanity, no straight thing was ever made." If that is true, then no one was more adept at explaining and ironing out the twists, gnarls and contortions of our era than he.



The life of Isaiah Berlin, pictured with Sir Yehudi Menuhin (right), encapsulated a century, from the Russian revolution to the fall of the Berlin Wall (AP photos)

LETTERS

ing the world

Hasan H. Haddad

FAO chief warns of growing gap between rich and poor

Answer: Easy to feel like this working in the

Daily Business Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Industrial Development Bank doubles capital to JD24m, to distribute half share as free bonus

THE GENERAL assembly of the Industrial Development Bank (IDB) has approved, in an extraordinary meeting, doubling the bank's capital from JD12 million to JD24 million. The increase would come from the capitalisation of around JD6 million voluntary reserves by granting half a share free bonus to shareholders for every share they hold.

The remaining amount will be raised through offering prime shares for private subscription, the largest portion of which will be for strategic shareholders. They will include the Social Security Corporation buying 2.4 million shares, the European Investment Bank getting two million shares and the Jordanian government taking 690,000 shares. About 0.9 million shares will be open to the shareholders for subscription.

IDB General Manager Rajab Al Saad indicated that foreign equity was very minimal but such an equity will be between ten and eleven per cent when the European Investment Bank enters as a strategic partner. He referred to other investments, such as the provision fund of the United Nations staff and the Qatari government, but noted that they are weak. He attributed the weak Arab

investment to purely political reasons as the Gulf crisis had been a noticeable turning point in this regard.

Replying to a question about the volume of foreign loans extended to the IDB, Mr. Saad estimated the amount at about JD50 million provided by the European Investment Bank and the Arab Fund for Development. He explained that the IDB does not finance its loans from deposits like other commercial banks noting that the bank can borrow to about JD120 million.

Mr. Saad said the IDB is planning to issue JD10 million worth of tradeable bonds which will be officially announced at a later date. He added that the bank's portfolio of shares amounts to JD8.5 million.

The general manager revealed that the bank was able to generate around JD3 million profit during the first nine months of this year. He estimated that the bank will have a JD43 million of shareholders equity by the end of this year after doubling the capital and including the profit for 1997 (Al Dustour + Al Arab Al Yawm).

Banks given approval to capitalise reserves and retained earnings

AMMAN (Petra) — The Securities Commission Board (SCB) has given its consent to requests by the Jordan Bank and the Jordan Islamic Bank to increase their capital by capitalising voluntary reserves and retained earnings.

A SCB statement said that the two banks can make the transfer after paying the required fees as stipulated by the SCB law.

The SCB has also given its consent to a number of

companies to list their shares in the parallel market after meeting the requirements in accordance with article eight of the parallel market's regulations.

These companies are: The United Glass Industries Company, the International Company for Optical and Hearing, NutriDar, the International Company for Medical Investment, the Jordan Specialised Investment Company, the

Advanced Pharmaceutical Industries Company, the Modern Food Industries and Vegetable Oil Company, the Century Investment Group, the Al-Ekbal Printing and Packaging Company.

The SCB also decided to drop from the list of public shareholding companies as of Jan. 1, 1998 those firms which have failed to pay required fees.

First Mercedes assembled in Mideast hits road in Egypt

CAIRO (AFP) — The first Mercedes E-200 saloon car assembled in the Middle East hit the road Saturday in Egypt, as part of a joint venture between German technology and cheap Egyptian labour.

Eleven of the 2,500 cars which will be produced annually in Egypt rolled off the assembly

line at a ceremony attended by senior officials from Daimler-Benz AG and its Egyptian partners NATCO and Egyptian German Automotive (EGA).

"Each year we sell 1,000 Mercedes cars, including 700 of the E-200 class, but by assembling them here now we will raise sales by 250 per cent," Zakariya Makary, marketing director at NATCO, told AFP.

The private firm NATCO holds 74 per cent of EGA while Daimler-Benz has 26 per cent stake in EGA.

Current production of the E-200 class will be exclusively for the local market.

"We began taking bookings for the cars at the start of July but we had to stop at the end of the month because we already had 1,500 requests, which represents our entire production until the end of 1998," Mr. Makary said.

He joked that had they known demand would be so high the company could have saved the three million pounds (\$883,000) it spent on its advertising campaign.

Egyptian customers will be paying 289,000 pounds (\$87,650) for an E-200 assembled here, or about 40 per cent less than an imported car, and the saloon comes in six colors.

"It takes two days to produce a car in Egypt compared to five or six hours in Germany thanks to automation," said Herbert Siefried, director of production.

Mercedes began building its assembly plant in the industrial October 6th City north of Cairo in 1996 with the joint venture costing 60 million pounds (\$18 million) in paid up capital and a total investment of 180 million pounds (\$53 million).

The environment friendly plant uses recycled water and air-filtered equipment and can be expanded to produce 10,000 units annually if two assembly lines are operated round-the-clock.

It employs 250 Egyptian workers, including 45 engineers, and five German experts.

"Ninety-eight per cent of the Egyptian employees have already worked in the car industry in Egypt or abroad and are assisted by 15 German experts who make frequent visits here," Siefried said.

Forty per cent of the spare parts are also produced in Egypt in line with Mercedes-Benz guidelines. "The security measures of the car assembled in Egypt are identical to those in Germany," Siefried said.

Ever since it hit the roads in Egypt, the E-200 class has been nicknamed here "Uyun" (eyes in Arabic) because of the round shape of its headlights.

Asian bank crisis could last 7 years — Goldman Sachs

SINGAPORE (R) — Asia's banking crisis could last as long as seven years if the proper corrective measures are not taken, the head of Asia Banking Investment Research at U.S. investment bank Goldman Sachs has said.

Roy Ramos told a news conference many Asian banks were fragile with a high proportion of bad loans, poor regulation and significant unhedged exposure to fluctuating currencies.

The crisis in Thailand has already led to the suspension of more than 50 finance houses and many of Thailand's banks are under close scrutiny.

Mr. Ramos said banks and financial authorities across the region needed to recognise the scale of the problem

and respond with a range of measures, including tighter regulations, keeping spending and borrowing in check and monitoring credit risks carefully.

"If authorities and banks do all these things, recovery will come in one, two or three years," Mr. Ramos said.

"If the right measures are not taken, this could well be a five to seven year recovery," he added.

"In Thailand, the past few weeks have been disappointing," he said, arguing that the scale of the financial and banking crisis in the country had not been recognised until too late.

"Part of the problem in Thailand was that there was a denial of the problem and procrastination," he said.

"You can't solve a problem by denial."

"The Thai banking crisis could have been prevented last year by proper action. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," he added.

But Mr. Ramos said most other countries in the region showed signs of acting more swiftly.

"We hold out the hope that in Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines, it will be a quick recovery and so far those governments have done the right things, by strengthening the banks... and addressing the macroeconomic issues and weaknesses," he said.

"We continue to stress that even with the credit excesses, that further banking problems like we have seen

in Thailand are not pre-ordained," he added. "Good regulation can spell the difference between manageable problems and systemic banking problems."

Mr. Ramos said he expected more difficulties ahead for banks in Indonesia and Malaysia and said consumers in some countries would have to face higher interest rates in the short term.

Several economies would slow and the challenge for governments would be to ensure this slowdown was not too severe.

"There is going to be more pain ahead," he said.

Mr. Ramos said some Thai banks needed to be better funded and some of the funds might have to come from abroad.

REUTERS

REUTERS

The Business of Information


Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	FRF	YEN
US Dollar	1.7100	0.5927	1.3950	124.25	1.4085	1677.80	1.9245	5.7145	
DE Mark	0.5846	1.0000	0.3464	0.6157	0.8234	980.88	1.1254	3.3477	
GB Sterling	1.6872	2.8860	1.0000	2.3568	208.52	2.3764	2830.78	3.2470	9.6415
CH Franc	0.7168	1.2254	0.4246	1.0000	89.05	1.0093	1202.28	138.02	4.0849
JP Yen	0.0080	1.3757	0.4767	1.1223	1.0000	1.1331	13.50	154.83	4.5973
CA Dollar	0.7100	1.2112	0.4183	0.9837	1.13	1.0000	1187.46	1.3822	4.0539
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0187	0.3530	0.0831	1352.27	0.8391	11.47	3.4044	
FR Franc	0.5196	0.8833	0.3078	0.7247	64.52	0.7917	871.58	2.9886	
YEN	0.1750	0.2991	0.1037	0.24030	21.72	0.2464	33.67	33.6700	

Middle Eastern Currencies									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	FRF	YEN
US Dollar	1.7100	0.5927	1.3950	124.25	1.4085	1677.80	1.9245	5.7145	
Jordan Dinar	1.4114	2.4033	0.8321	0.1383	0.4277	5.1838	2153.14	4.7996	
Saudi Riyal	0.2688	0.1889	0.1005	0.97	0.0808	0.98	406.77	0.9067	
Bahrain Dinar	2.85	1.8794	0.9483	9.86	0.8038	9.74	4046.63	9.0204	
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1946	0.1032	1.032	1.01	419.04	0.9341		
Kuwait Dinar	2.3003	2.3383	12.3772	12.442	12.01	12.12	5034.65	0.9341	
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1929	1.0211	1.026	0.9912	0.0825	415.36	0.9259	
Lebanese/1000	0.66	0.4644	2.4584	0.2471	2.3864	0.1986	2.4075	2.2291	
Egyptian	0.2941	0.2084	1.1029	0.1109	1.0708	0.0891	1.0800	448.61	

Mid-East Currencies									
	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	FRF	YEN
SA Riyal	0.2688	0.1889	0.1005	0.97	0.0808	0.98	406.77	0.9067	
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.1929	1.0211	1.026	0.9912	0.0825	415.36	0.9259	
KW Dinar	2.3003	2.3383	12.3772	12.442	12.01	12.12	5034.65	0.9341	
BH Dinar	0.3770	0.53721	1.57233	1.70233	329.707				
CY Pound	1.9803	3.3863	1.1734	2.7625	246.052				

Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)									
	Period	Rate	Period	Rate	Period	Rate	Period	Rate	Period
USD	3	5.52	6	5.66	12	5.70	24	5.82	5.97
DEM	3	7.38	6	7.50	12	7.59	24	7.62	7.88
JPY	3	0.37	6	0.37	12	0.37	24	0.38	0.38
DEM	3	3.54	6	3.72	12	3.90	24	4.09	
FRF	3	3.50	6	3.56	12	3.80	24	4.07	
CHF	3	1.85	6	2.03	12	1.88	24	2.06	
ITL	3	6.74	6	6.61	12	6.23	24	5.94	5.75

Energy									
	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit	Price	Unit
Coffee (c/lbs)	145.67	Spot							
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1641	Spot							
Sugar (\$/ton)	303.8	Spot							
Wheat (\$/ton)	140	Spot							
Soya (c/lbs)	25.78	Spot							
Tea (c/kg)	156	Spot							
Rubber (\$/ton)	0	Spot							
Rice (\$/ton)	400	Spot							

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET										
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHEMSANI										
TELEPHONE: 607171 / 607179										
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 08/11/1997										
										
PAST 12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P / E	DIV.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE	
HIGH	LOW			OF	SHARES	TRADED	PRICE	PRICE		
				TRANS.		JD				
346.000	245.000	ARAB BANK	15.0	1.22	3	360	118320	329.00	327.00	2.00-
2.340	1.680	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	E	0.00	22	8118	14650	1.81	1.81	-
5.800	4.100	CAIRO AMMAN BANK	10.3	3.00	2	4350	21750	5.10	5.00	10-
3.600	2.160	BAU OF JORDAN	8.2	0.00	2	654	1923	2.95	2.94	01-
1.190	890	MID. EAST INV. BK.	72.3	0.00	1	5000	5900	1.12	1.10	02-
2.600	2.150	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	10.4	6.04	13	7500	19443	2.59	2.62	03+
5.200	4.600	THE HOUSING BK.	14.9	3.88	2	5050	25250	5.10	5.00	10-
4.180	2.440	JOR. KUWAIT BANK	11.8	0.00	19	23117	77200	3.28	3.32	04+
1.050	740	JOR. GULF BANK	4.6	9.09	1	500	385	7.79	7.77	02-
3.970	3.450	ARAB JOR. INV. BK.	19.1	0.00	2	3200	12344	3.97	3.97	-
4.050	3.420	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	14.4	3.36	30	12873	46083	4.35	3.55	08-
1.900	870	BEIT AL-MAL (BEITNA)	6	16.48	5	900	822	9.3	9.1	02-
BANK SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 235.27 %CHG: -0.60										
1.740	1.200	ARABIAN SEAS INSUR.	9.3	0.00	3	1000	1290	1.35	1.29	07-
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 116.61 %CHG: -0.27										
2.050	1.550	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	9.1	5.29	11	4950	9308	1.89	1.89	-
4.030	1.320	JORD. ELECTRICITY	19.8	3.45	1	50	167	3.31	3.33	02+
1.550	930	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	4	1250	1445	1.18	1.15	03-
8.900	6.700	ALRAI	14.9	6.02	6	350	2897	8.41	8.30	11-
1.740	1.150	MID. EAST HOTELS	20.0	0.00	3	2500	3275	1.42	1.40	02-
3.900	2.890	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	9.6	0.00	4	550	2004	3.63	3.68	05+
1.100	900	ZAKRA EDUCATION	8	0.00	5	1200	1149	1.94	1.93	01-
2.230	1.630	UNITED CO.	8.3	6.35	1	250	435	1.72	1.74	-
1.950	640	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	1	400	292	7.75	7.73	02-
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 109.98 %CHG: -0.04										
4.450	3.030	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	21.0	3.53	54	26350	109510	3.08	3.12	04+
4.140	3.000	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	9.7	2.86	12	51784	181240	3.50	3.50	-
7.050	5.570	ARAB POTASH CO.	14.7	3.16	4	5150	32532	6.25	6.33	08+
11.160	9.070	JOR. PETROL. REFINARY	10.5	8.18	2	104	1131	11.00	10.87	13-
3.260	1.330	INDUSTRIAL CORN. MOR.	9	0.00	3	279	368	1.37	1.40	03+
7.150	5.800	JOR. WORSTED MILLS	10.6	3.03	3	160	1060	6.68	6.60	05-
4.700	3.040	ARAB FERR. MANF.	11.6	4.76	19	4991	20844	4.19	4.20	01+
1.750	1.020	JOR. PIPES MANFCT.	14.4	6.90	1	300	348	1.17	1.16	02-
6.000	4.300	DAR ALZAMA. DV. INV.	13.9	4.39	1	200	1138	5.65	5.69	04+
3.850	2.220	ARAB ALUM. IND.	5.6	10.42	11	7400	17914	2.42	2.40	02-
4.50	690	INVESTCO. K. POLYTR.	2	9.9	2	900	470	4.88	4.87	01-
1.330	700	NATIONAL STEEL IND.	9	0.00	4	1050	735	1.70	1.70	-
770	510	NATIONAL INDS.	9	0.00	2	1000	555	5.87	5.85	02-
510	200	INTERMED. PETROL. CHEM.	6	0.00	6	5400	2808	1.52	1.52	02-
1.920	530	JOR. ROCKWOLD INDS.	9	0.00	2	750	465	6.62	6.62	-
2.970	1.420	UNIV. CHEM. INDS.	12.7	7.09	4	800	1133	1.44	1.41	03-
3.000	1.580	NATL. CABLE WIRE-MFAC	31.3	0.00	1	100	195	1.98	1.95	03-
1.670	1.150	ARAB FERR. MANF.	14.3	5.47	10	2726	128	1.28	1.28	02-
1.400	600	KAMHER INVEST.	63.1	0.00	3	550	351	6.64	6.64	-
1.880	1.080	UNIV. MODN. INDS.	P	22	73	51250	61810	1.38	1.18	-
1.610	970	EL. & MECH. CORP.	15.0	0.00	8	900	177	1.88	1.88	01-
2.090	1.340	EL. & MECH. WEAR	50.9	0.00	3	220	316	1.44	1.44	-
1.330	1.080	INTL. TOBACCO	6.6	0.00	8	3650	4385	1.22	1.20	02-
710	510	JORDAN STEEL	34.4	6.78	1	600	8004	7.68	7.68	-
1840	570	MID-EAST COMPLEX	11.1	17.24	15	20900	12316	59	58	01-
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS										
INDEX: 116.57 %CHG: +0.86										
GRAND TOTAL										
INDEX: 170.35 %CHG: -0.12										
400 291546 830824										
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 08/11/1997										
610	380	JOR. TRADE FAC.	10.1	0.00	12	23450	8909	39	38	01-
800	550	UNION INV. 50%	5	0.00	5	350	313	77	75	01-
570	360	ARAB FIN. INVEST.	9	0.00	8	19500	7800	41	40	01-
750	400	AL-SABAQ INV.	P	0.00	2	1000	820	85	82	03-
950	400	NATL. MTL. ENG. MANICO	4	0.00	2	46150	19466	42	40	02-
660	480	MID-EAST PHARM. 75%	E	0.00	5	20600	8034	65	64	01-
1400	860	UNION TOBACCO 75%	9	0.00	1	250	240	1.20	1.21	01+
550	730	RAIL PHARM.	E	0.00	1	340	341	52	52	-
470	290	INDS. ENG.	9	0.00	2	900	930	31	31	-
820	590	NATL. POLYTR.	E	0.00	1	100	62	63	62	01-
1.000	600	AL-TALABANJAH 75%	93.7	0.00	6	750	735	67	67	-
1.020	720	ARAB INT. TCO. FACT.	49.7	0.00	12	13390	13762	1.00	1.03	03+
GRAND TOTAL										
78 13470m 42447										

Asian World Cup qualifiers Japan secure play-off place

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan kept their World Cup hopes alive when they overwhelmed Kazakhstan 5-1 at the National Stadium on Saturday to secure second place in Asian Zone Group B.

The victory guarantees Japan a play-off with the second-placed team in Group A. If Japan win, they qualify automatically; if they lose they will play-off against Australia.

Group winners South Korea, with 16 points, take the automatic spot at next year's finals in France. The Koreans were to play their final match on Sunday against the United Arab Emirates (9 pts), who cannot now overtake Japan (13).

Yutaka Akita opened the scoring for Japan after 11 minutes in the National Stadium on Saturday and Hidetoshi Nakata made it 2-0 four minutes later.

Masashi Nakayama made the game safe before half-time with a third for Japan.

Skipper Masami Ihara and substitute Takuya Takagi were also on target in the second half, scoring in the 66th and 88th minutes, while Pavel Yevtyevyev grabbed a consolation goal for the Kazaks with a 72nd-minute free-kick.



Kazakhstan's striker Viktor Zubarev (L) gets past Japanese captain Masami Ihara during the first half of the final match of the World Cup soccer qualifying Asian Group B held at Tokyo's national stadium. Japan beat Kazakhstan 5-1 to advance to an Asian zone World Cup qualifying playoff, which will be held in Malaysia on November 16 (Reuters photo)

Asia Group B Standings

	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	PTS
1. South Korea	7	5	1	1	16	6	16
2. Japan	8	3	4	1	17	9	13
3. UAE	7	2	3	2	8	9	9
4. Uzbekistan	8	1	3	4	13	18	6
5. Kazakhstan	8	1	3	4	7	19	6

Iran replace coaching squad

Iran have axed their entire national team coaching staff following the 2-0 defeat to Qatar in World Cup qualifying match on Friday.

Brazilian Vladimir Vierra has been appointed as the new head coach, the first time a foreigner has filled the job since the 1979 Islamic revolution, the Iranian Football Federation confirmed on Saturday.

Iranian Parviz Kamassi has been named Vierra's assistant.

They replace Mohammad Mayeli-Kohan, Jalal Tcheraghpour and Nader Faryachchirani, sacked for what the Federation called their "lack of efficiency". Friday's defeat threw

open Asian Group A. A win for Iran would have given them first place and an automatic spot in the finals in France.

Now the winner of the match between Qatar and Saudi Arabia next Wednesday will go top. Iran, who have 12 points from their eight matches, are at least guaranteed of at least coming second and taking part in a play-off for a ticket to the finals.

Williams and McLaren accused of race-fixing

LONDON (AFP) — Britain's two leading Formula One constructors, Williams and McLaren, have been accused of colluding to arrange the finish of the vital final Grand Prix of the season where Canadian Jacques Villeneuve clinched his first world title.

The Times newspaper reported Saturday that its investigation had unearthed two tapes of radio transmissions between pit crews and drivers at the European Grand Prix at Jerez in Spain last month.

The paper claimed the tapes reveal that Williams and McLaren team officials orchestrated the order of the first three cars over the line and that their allegations have forced the sport's governing body, the Federation Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA), to hold an inquiry.

Formula One Constructors' Association chief Bernie Ecclestone told The Times: "This is hard to believe."

Williams driver Villeneuve was overtaken by Mika Hakkinen and McLaren team-mate David Coulthard on the last lap at Jerez and finished third.

But The Times claimed the tapes point to the order of the first three being contrived, that Villeneuve, who only had to finish sixth to clinch the title, was ordered to pull his Williams over to permit Hakkinen to win for McLaren, and that Coulthard was instructed to allow Hakkinen through.

Neither Williams nor McLaren was able to comment on the allegations.

Rodman has Bulls bickering again

ATLANTA (AFP) — Dennis Rodman is in a funk and talking about leaving the Chicago Bulls.

Michael Jordan's message to the National Basketball Association's six-time reigning rebound champion was clear — shape up or leave.

Rodman missed two crucial free throws and committed a foul to wipe out a game-tying Jordan basket in the final seconds of an 80-78 loss to Atlanta here Friday, a loss that snapped Chicago's three-game win streak.

"I just haven't been playing well," Rodman said. "The interest level just isn't there. I gave no effort tonight. I had no effort. Right now, it's difficult to get up for games."

"I'm just going through the motions. I don't have the love for it. I will try a couple more games and if I don't feel something, I will have to make some changes. It's time to move on it seems like."

When asked if he was thinking of retirement, Rodman said, "I will have to do something."

Jordan, who scored 27 points in a losing cause, was upset with Rodman.

"If that's the case, go home," Jordan said. "You don't have to be out there if that's the way you feel. Step aside. Don't pacify us."

Rodman's troubles are the last thing the Bulls need as they start their quest for a sixth NBA crown in eight years without Scottie Pippen, out until at least late December following foot surgery.

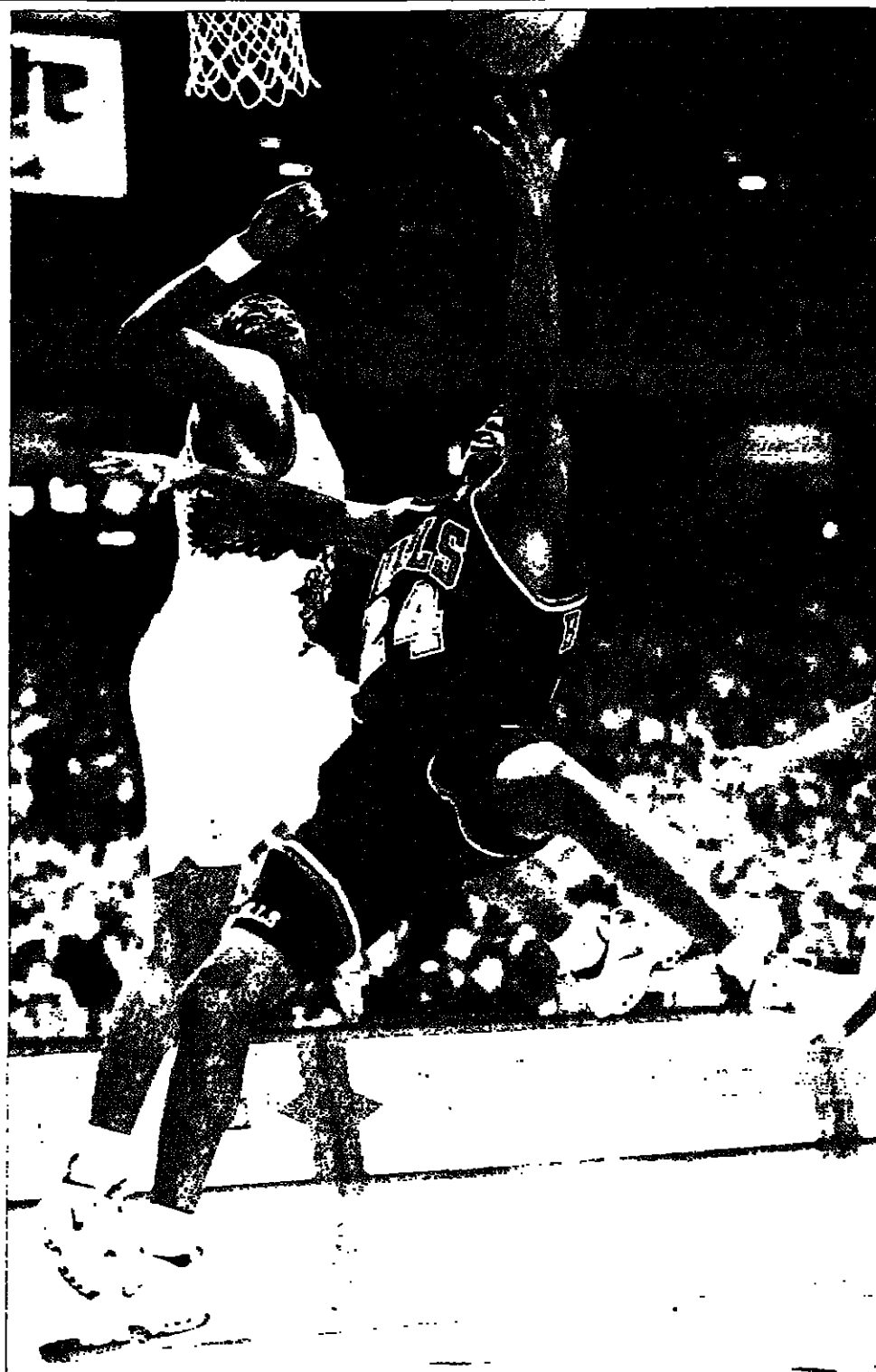
Rodman has averaged 4.6 points and 10.8 rebounds in 27.6 minutes through the Bulls' 3-2 start. He was kept below 10 rebounds three times, something that never happened last season until the playoffs.

Jordan averages 26 points a game, but defenders can concentrate on shutting him down with Pippen gone and Rodman not improving his paltry point production as his rebound numbers dip.

Australia's Luc Longley has averaged 11 points and Croatian Toni Kukoc has contributed 10 a game, but the Bulls do not look like the championship club they were five months ago.

Zaire's Dikembe Mutombo hit a pair of free throws with just under two minutes to play for the winning points as Atlanta rose to 5-0.

"It's not just about beating the Bulls," Mutombo said. "It's about getting as many wins as we can in the beginning of the regular season. We know what we want to accomplish — getting a



Chicago Bulls' Scott Burrell (24) puts up a shot attempt after Atlanta Hawks' Greg Anderson fouled Burrell in the second period in Atlanta (Reuters photo)

championship."

The Hawks, one of only three NBA unbeaten, won before a crowd of 45,790 at the same Georgia Dome where Pippen helped the U.S. Olympic team capture gold last year. It was the fifth-largest crowd in NBA history.

Lakers 99, Knicks 94: Rodman pondered his farewell on the night Shaquille O'Neal played his first game for the Los Angeles Lakers after missing the opening week of the season with strained abdominal muscles.

The Lakers rose to 3-0 by beating the visiting New York Knicks 99-94, keeping the Knicks off the scoreboard in the final 3 1/2 minutes.

Nets 99, Heat 87: In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Chris Gatling had 24 points and 12 rebounds as New Jersey beat Miami to reach 4-0 for the first time in the NBA.

Kendall Gill added 19 points for the nets, Jayson Williams had 18 points and 10 rebounds, and Sam Cassell 18 points and 13 assists. Isaac Austin led Miami with 21 points and 11 rebounds.

Supersonics 99, Pacers 93: In Indianapolis, Gary

Payton stole an inbound pass and made a tiebreaking layup with 23.4 seconds left, lifting Seattle past Indiana.

Payton led Seattle with 24 points, while Vin Baker added 17 points and 11 rebounds. Detlef Schrempf had 16 points. Reggie Miller led the Pacers with 22 points, and Rik Smits added 20.

Cavaliers 96, Celtics 92: In Boston, Wesley Person scored nine of his 26 points in the last 2:03 as Cleveland rallied to beat Boston.

Shawn Kemp led the cavaliers with 28 points and 15 rebounds, and Derek Anderson added 17 points. Antoine Walker had 22 points and 11 rebounds for Boston, winless in four games since beating Chicago in the season opener.

Hornets 107, Wizards 92: In Landover, Maryland, Glen Rice scored 24 points and Anthony Mason had 21 in Charlotte's victory over Washington.

Vlade Divac added 15 points and 10 rebounds for the hornets, who traded Mugsy Bogues and Tony Delk to Golden state earlier in the day for B.J.

Armstrong. Chris Webber led Washington with 24 points.

Magic 89, Pistons 84: In Auburn Hills, Michigan, Penny Hardaway scored 11 of his 20 points in the fourth quarter in Orlando's victory over Detroit.

Malik Sealy led the pistons with 18 points, and Grant Hill had 15 points, 11 assists and eight rebounds.

Trail Blazers 86, Rockets 85: In Houston, Isaiah Rider made a 14-foot (4 1/2-meter) jumper with 6.6 seconds left to push Portland past Houston.

Rider finished with 23 points, and Kenny Anderson led the Trail Blazers with 24 points. Hakeem Olajuwon led the Rockets with 27 points, and Charles Barkley and Mario Elie each had 14.

Clippers 98, Kings 85: In Sacramento, California, Brent Barry scored 11 of his 17 points in the third quarter as Los Angeles beat Sacramento to snap the Clippers' season-opening three-game losing streak.

Mitch Richmond scored 25 points for the Kings, who dropped to 0-4, a crowd of 15,858 attended the game, snapping the Kings' string of consecutive sell-outs at 497.

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AMMAN LITTLE LEAGUE

Tots Division 1990-1992 (all are winners)

Al Sadat vs Delonghi
McDonald's vs Klim

Juniors One Division 1988-1989

IPCO 2 vs Nokia 1
(Penalty kicks 0:0 original time)
Varta 2 vs Al Jawhara 0
(Penalty kicks 0:0 original time)
Varta & IPCO will play cup final game on Friday Nov. 14th at 9:00.

Juniors Two Division 1986-1987

Intervet 1 vs RMCCS 0
Porsche 3 vs RJ 0
Porsche & Intervet will play cup final game on Friday Nov. 14th at 9:00.

Mids Division 1984-1985

Reinert 3 vs Amigo Nabil 2
Arby's 2 vs Dune's Club 1
Reinert & Arby's will play cup final game on Friday Nov. 14th at 9:00.

Seniors Division 1981-1983

J. Insurance 2 vs Zalatimo 1
Coffee Break 3 vs Coaches 5
Jordan Insurance & Coffee Break will play cup final game on Friday Nov. 14th at 10:15.

Coaches will play a game vs ALL STARS SENIORS DIVISION at 11:30 on Fri. Nov. 14.

CINEMA	TEL: 634144	CINEMA	TEL: 634144	CINEMA	TEL: 699238	CINEMA	TEL: 677420	CINEMA	TEL: 079 33430	CINEMA	TEL: 079 33430	Hisham Yanes Theatre
PHILADELPHIA "1"		PHILADELPHIA "2"		PLAZA		CONCORD		GALLERIA 1		GALLERIA 2		TEL: 625155
Jane Reno & Patrick Broyl ... in				Van Damme... in		CONCORD "1"		ABDOUN		ABDOUN		NOW ON DAILY
THE JAGUAR		007		DOUBLE TEAM		BOYS ON THE SIDE		HERCULES		SCREAM		THE GOVERNMENT IN THE SERVICE OF PEOPLE
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 5:00, 6:30		Shows: 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30		Starring Hisham Yanes and Amal Dabbas
						SLEEP WALKERS		CON AIR				For reservations call: 640155, 625155
						Shows: 3:30, 6:00 only		Shows: 8:30, 10:45				

structures' Association chief Ben...
Times: "This is hard to believe...
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for McLaren was able to comment



attempt after Atlanta Hawks...
Atlanta - Reuters photo

Magin 89, Pishov

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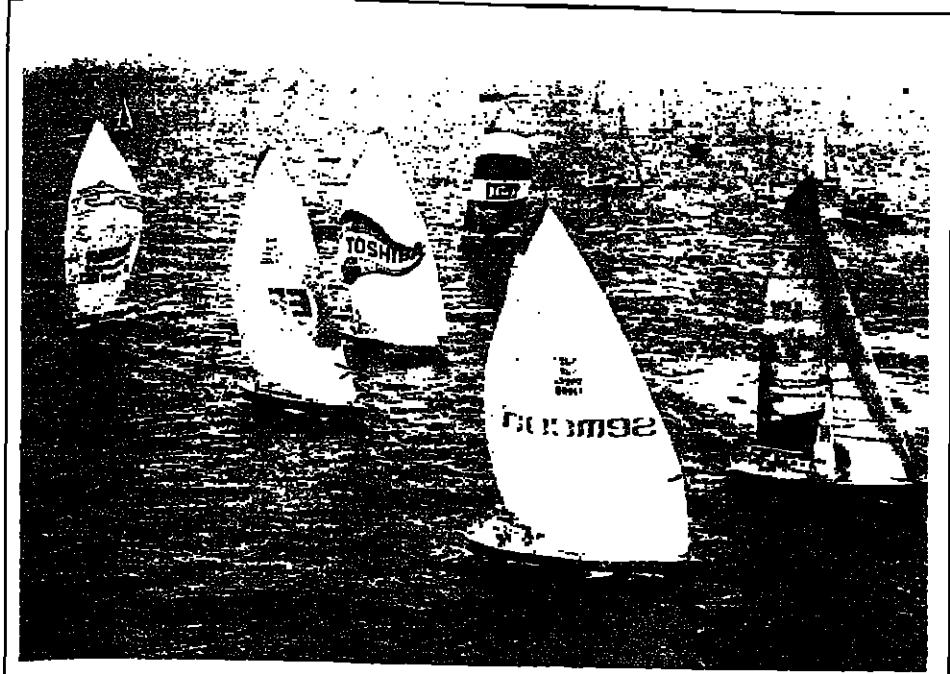
Clippers vs. Kings

Vizards...

Bisher Yanes...
111-625155

THE GOVERNMENT
OF PEOPLE

Sports



Yachts negotiate the first boy as they set off on the second leg of the Whitbread Round The World Race. The second leg runs from Cape Town to Fremantle in Australia (Reuters photo)

Siemerink upsets Rusedski

STOCKHOLM (AFP) — Greg Rusedski's preparation for next week's world championship suffered a setback Saturday when he lost 4-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-4 to Dutch outsider Jan Siemerink in the semi-finals of the \$825,000 Stockholm Open.

Siemerink, whose ranking on the ATP Tour has plummeted from 15th in January to 105 now, was unfazed by the big-serving Briton's reputation at Kungliga Tennishallen.

The 27-year-old Dutchman will rise back into the top 100 on Monday after reaching his first final in more than a year.

Siemerink had counted Boris Becker and Wimbledon finalist Cedric Pioline among his victims this week before adding world number five Rusedski to the list.

In Sunday's final Siemerink will play either top seed Patrick Rafter of Australia or Swedish home hero Jonas Bjorkman, ranked third and fourth in the world respectively.

If Rafter reaches the Stockholm final, the 25-year-old Aussie will leapfrog world number two Michael Chang when the rankings are released on Monday, one day before the start of round-robin play at the ATP World Championship in Hanover, Germany.

Rusedski, Rafter and Bjorkman are three of the new faces who have booked appearances. Also qualified for the eight-man field are world number one Pete Sampras, Chang and Spain's Carlos Moya.

Thomas Muster, Sergi Bruguera, Yevgeny Kafelnikov and Marcelo Rios are bidding for the last two places in Moscow and Santiago this week.

Rusedski appeared to be fully recovered from a stomach virus which laid him low this week, forcing him to bed for two days between playing first and second-round matches at the Kungliga Tennishallen.

But after losing serve to start the final set his fate was close to sealed. The Briton fought back while trailing 4-5, forcing four break points, all saved by the Dutchman.

But Siemerink wriggled out of trouble with another superb volley and then advanced as Rusedski put a backhand into the net.

Rusedski started confidently during his 11th semi-final of the year, but has now lost four of seven clashes with Siemerink.

The Briton got an early break in the third game of the opening set against his Dutch opponent, but had a few hiccups in closing out the set.

Siemerink, 27, saved two set points. The Briton double-faulted and was then passed by the Dutchman on the next point.

But the second seed prevailed on his third chance, sending over an ace.

The second set stayed with serve into a tiebreaker. There Siemerink prevailed, levelling the sets with a service winner after one hour, 20 minutes.

Rusedski was far from disappointed after his showing. "It's been a positive week for me. The key to the match was the three double-faults I had in the first game of the third set," he said.

"I gift-wrapped that game for him. But Jan was the better player on the day. He hit some great returns and played some good tennis. I'm not disappointed in the least."

"I played a good first set and had some chances in the second. The tiebreaker came down to a few points and he took his chances."

"I kept fighting and had a chance to go back into it when I had four break points in the last game."

Rusedski added: "It's been a gradual build-up for Hanover. Hopefully next week I can go as step or two further. I thought I played my break points very well. I cannot do much if my opponent comes up with winners of his own. He was the better man on the day. I was a bit off on my serve."

The Briton said he would go to Hanover with his confidence high. "I've got to be pleased. I'm getting my form back. It's positive. I'm looking forward to Hanover. I'll leave on Sunday and have an extra day of practice there."

Villa off into the unknown in UEFA Cup

GENEVA (AFP) — Aston Villa, England's last-remaining UEFA Cup representatives, were handed a toughie against tough Romanian Steaua Bucharest at Friday's third round draw here.

Brian Little's men, who ousted Athletic Bilbao in round two, have the advantage of playing the November 25 away leg first, meaning they can finish the job at Villa Park on December 9.

The Romanians came through by the narrowest of margins in the last round, beating French outfit Bastia on away goals after surrendering a two-goal lead in the second match to go down 3-2 in Corsica.

Little admitted on hearing the draw that the clash with Steaua will be a journey into the unknown as Villa target a place in the last eight for the first time since the 1977-78 season — when they went out at that stage to Barcelona.

He said: "The difference from the other ties this season is that we knew a lot about Bordeaux and Bilbao with their relative closeness to England and with their games being shown on television."

"But I am sure a lot of the lads are going to be coming up to me and saying: 'Who are they, can we see videos of them, give us some information please.'"

"We always do our homework on the opposition and our chief scout Peter Withe will be going to watch them this weekend."

"But that sort of preparation is going to be even more important this time as we don't know much about their players."

Little added: "I am pleased we are away because that has been the format for the first two rounds which has seen us go on and win the ties. Hopefully that will be to our advantage again."

"However, we have to put that on the back burner for now and concentrate on climbing up the Premiership table. I think still being involved in Europe can be a help in that direction."

Liverpool's conquerors Strasbourg pulled a plum tie in the shape of Inter Milan, who have already won the competition twice and who reached the final last season.

The Italians, who ousted another French side in Lyon in the last round despite losing the home leg, include French international star Yuri Djorkaeff.

Strasbourg coach Jacky Duguerepoux acknowledged that, after superb triumphs over Rangers and Liverpool, Inter might prove a bridge too far.

"We're getting used to drawing the big names and with Inter Milan, the Italian leaders, it's difficult to land a bigger fish."

Skipper Gerald Batlle agreed but admitted: "I am disappointed. I wanted to go back to England — British opponents were right up our street. But Inter — that's a major step up. They're a dream team with Ronaldo, Djorkaeff and the rest."

Goalkeeper Alexander Vencel, who played a blinder at Anfield last Tuesday,

Wihdat leave for 13th Arab Champions Cup today

Jordanian champions meet S. Arabia's Ahli in opening match

By Aileen Bannayan
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Kingdom's soccer champions Al Wihdat Sunday leave for Tunisia to take part in the 13th Arab Champions Cup hosted by Al Afriqi Club Nov. 14-23.

The eight competing clubs have been divided into two groups. Al Wihdat will be playing in Group A alongside Ahli Jeddah of Saudi Arabia, Widad Talmasan of Algeria and hosts Al Afriqi.

Group B includes Al Safsasi of Tunisia, Egypt's Al Ahli, Kuwait's Kathima, and Al Ama'ri of Palestine.

Playing their third Champions Cup, Al Wihdat are in a tough group but will be hoping to advance to the second round and secure an advanced position in the championship which has been dominated by Saudi and Iraqi teams in 9 of the past 12 championships.

Al Wihdat, titleholders of the Kingdom's Premier League, are in top form after impressive results and an unbeaten record in the league which they currently lead halfway through.

They will be playing Saudi Arabia's Al Ahli in the opening match Nov. 14, meet Talmasan Nov. 16 and Afriqi Nov. 18.

The top two teams of each group will advance to the second round which starts Nov. 21 and the championship, concludes Nov. 23.

Each competing team will get \$5000 from the Arab Soccer Federation



Jordanian champions Al Wihdat

who will also cover air-fare and accommodation.

The winning team will receive \$50,000, the runner-up \$30,000, while the third and fourth finishers will split \$25,000.

Al Wihdat have received JD1000 from the Jordan Football Association but have not received the JD5000 sponsorship the Ministry of Youth and Culture allocates to teams representing the Kingdom abroad.

Since its inception, Jordanian participation in the event has been intermittent. Al Ahli took part in the inaugural competition in 1981 finishing last among the three competing teams.

Al Faisali were the only Jordanian team to advance to the second round in 1993 after beating Al Shabab of the UAE 7-2.

Al Hussein was the fourth team to represent Jordan in 1993 but were eliminated in the first round.

Al Wihdat were knocked out in the first round in 1995. As Jordanian champions they took part in 1996 again failing to advance beyond the first round.

Looking back at the archives of the event, Jordanian teams won three of 15 matches they played, drew in two and lost in 10.

As for Al Wihdat's chances, the team seem well-prepared and have been training under Iraqi coach Anwar Jassam.

Along their impressive league record, Al Wihdat also reached the semifinals of the Jordan Cup alongside Al Hussein, Al Ramtha and Al Faisali.

Earlier in the year, Al Wihdat also took part in the Cup Winners' Cup in Cairo and were impressive against well-known teams.

The team includes 12 internationals who have represented Jordan on the national team as well as regional competitions with their club.

The lineup includes: Yousef Ammouri, Hisham and Jihad Abdul Mune'm, Adnan Tawel, Faisal Ibrahim, Marwan Shamali, Jamal Mahmoud, Ali Juma', Isam Odeh, Mustafa Adam, Walid Mikhael, Anas Kamal, Naser Ghandour, Abdullah Abu Zam'eh, Samer Bahlouz, Sufyan Abdullah, Rafat' Ali, Munir Abu Hantash, Khaled Majdalawi, Husam Sa'ad, Haitham Samreen.

Championship record	
Year	Winner
1981	Shurta (Iraq)
1984	Itifaq (Saudi Arabia)
1985	Al Rashid (Iraq)
1986	Al Rashid (Iraq)
1987	Al Rashid (Iraq)
1988	Itifaq (Saudi Arabia)
1989	Al Widad (Morocco)
1993	Shabab (Saudi Arabia)
1993	Taraji (Tunisia)
1994	Hilal (Saudi Arabia)
1995	Hilal (Saudi Arabia)
1996	Al Ahli (Egypt)

Scandal in U.S. weightlifting programme

COLORADO SPRINGS (AFP) — USA Weightlifting has dismissed nine of the 15 lifters in its Olympic Training Center resident athlete programme for allegedly possessing banned substances.

The Colorado Springs Gazette newspaper reported that the weightlifters involved were mostly juniors, and none of them had represented the United States in the senior world championships or Olympics.

That fact concerned officials of USA Weightlifting, since the resident-athletes programme is designed to nurture up and coming competitors.

"It's a real black eye to our resident programme," USA Weightlifting executive director George Greenway said. "We're just beside ourselves as to what the effect is going to be."

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Sudan peace talks end without an agreement

NAIROBI (AFP) — Peace talks between the Khartoum regime and southern Sudanese rebels ended in failure in Nairobi Friday after 10 days, sources close to the conference said.

The conference — the first face-to-face meeting between the two sides in three years — explored proposals to end Sudan's 14-year-old civil war, which is estimated to have cost a million lives in Africa's biggest country.

"There was no agreement," a rebel source told Agence France Presse shortly after the representatives of the Khartoum regime of President Omar Al Bashir and the Sudan Peoples' Liberation Army (SPLA) abandoned mediation by Kenyan Foreign Minister Kalonzo Musyoka.

The main stumbling block, sources said, was the SPLA's determination to link its demands to those of its northern dissident allies in the National Democratic Alliance (NDA).

The SPLA wants to see a confederation and an end to Islamic Sharia law, while the NDA's priority is greater democracy in Sudan as a whole.

While Khartoum was prepared to compromise on the religious issue, it balked on the issue of a confederation, which would give wide powers to the south.

Instead, the regime's dele-

gation offered only a federal system, with more power remaining in the capital.

The talks officially concerned only relations between the junta and the SPLA.

The Khartoum delegation was headed by Foreign Minister Ali Osman Mohammad Taha and the SPLA delegation by its second-in-command, Salva Kiir.

Fighting in southern Sudan had dogged the talks.

Friday, the Sudanese army said it had killed most of an SPLA rebel force which attacked a military post near the town of Torit on Monday.

It said the rebels had been backed by soldiers from a neighbouring country — which it did not name — who were trying to thwart the Nairobi talks. Three foreign soldiers were killed in the fighting, it said.

Two rebel tanks were also captured, the army said, but did not give any figures of government losses.

Meanwhile, relief workers said the SPLA had surrounded Juba, the southern capital and the government's last main stronghold there, with the front line between about 30 and 70 kilometres from the city.

Food was getting to Juba only by barge up the White Nile and by air.

An unknown number of residents have fled towards Yei, 150 kilometres to the

southwest, which is held by the rebels.

The South Sudan Defence Force, a coalition of SPLA splinter-groups which allied with the government in April, claimed to have recently captured a number of locations in the southern state of Upper Nile.

Its deputy commander, Peter Paul Kong, had warned at the start of the Nairobi talks that SPLA commanders and men would defect if the rebels failed to show sincerity in the negotiations and continued their "procrastination."

The war has embittered regional relations, with Khartoum accusing Eritrea, Ethiopia and Uganda of supporting the rebels, charges all three countries deny.

Uganda accuses Sudan of backing Ugandan rebels.

The United States slapped an economic embargo on Sudan as a "terrorist state" Monday, prohibiting U.S. trade with Sudan and barring financial transactions.

The junta slammed the sanctions as "a form of the aggression and injustice the American administration practices against states which have independent attitudes and are unwilling to succumb to its tutelage."

The Arab League condemned them too, saying they would hurt the Sudanese people more than President Al Bashir's regime.



THE MERRY SEASON LAUNCHED AT HARRODS: Mohammad Fayed (on the left) is all smiles Saturday as he sets off the festive season with an elaborate Christmas street parade. The Harrods boss filled the air with fake snow outside his London store as he welcomed Father Christmas (AFP photo)

Netanyahu renews conditions for south Lebanon withdrawal

BEIRUT (R) — Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said in remarks published on Saturday that Israel would immediately withdraw from south Lebanon if guerrilla groups there were dismantled and other conditions were met.

He was speaking in English in an interview with Middle East Television, run by Israel's local militia allies in the south, which was broadcast on Friday with Arabic translation and carried in Nida Al Watan newspaper on Saturday.

Mr. Netanyahu said the most important condition for a pullout was "the dismantling of terrorist organisations and a guarantee for the future of our allies."

The Israeli prime minister suggested that if his conditions were not met, the

Jewish state was prepared for a long-term presence in volatile south Lebanon.

"We will safeguard our presence in the border zone until God is willing," he stressed. "I consider that the situation is good and we are not passing through difficult times."

Hizbollah is fighting to drive Israeli forces and their local militia allies of the South Lebanon Army (SLA) from the Jewish state's self-declared "security" zone in south Lebanon.

Israel has suffered heavy losses in recent months, fuelling a debate at home over the continued presence of its soldiers in the self-declared zone.

Hizbollah has vowed to fight until the last drop of blood to drive Israeli troops and SLA militiamen from

south Lebanon, site of frequent roadside bombs, air raids, rocket attacks and fierce clashes.

Israel carved out the current self-declared south Lebanon buffer zone in 1985 with the declared aim of preventing guerrillas from launching cross-border attacks.

Hizbollah guerrillas have killed 39 Israeli soldiers this year — more than in any other single year since 1985 — prompting calls in Israel for a unilateral withdrawal.

Mr. Netanyahu repeated the official line that Israel was not prepared for a unilateral withdrawal from south Lebanon.

He said that Israel "would not delay for one second" a withdrawal from south Lebanon if it secured "a dismantling of terrorist groups

— most notably Hizbollah — and... a guarantee for the future of our allies and their rights."

So far this year, south Lebanon fighting has also killed 18 SLA militiamen and 52 Lebanese guerrillas, mostly Hizbollah fighters.

Israeli Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai last month ruled out a unilateral withdrawal, saying such a move would endanger communities on Israel's northern border.

Lebanese leaders have rejected Mr. Netanyahu's offer to have Lebanon deploy troops in the south and disarm Hizbollah in exchange for an Israeli pullout, insisting Israel simultaneously withdraw from the Golan Heights occupied since the 1967 Mideast war.

Israeli left accuses government of exploiting Rabin conspiracies

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The Israeli opposition and intelligence services accused the ruling right Saturday of trying to "falsify" history by focusing on the alleged role of a secret service informer in the 1995 assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

Avishai Rabin, who worked as an informer for the Shin Bet intelligence service, became a new political football two years after the assassination when ministers accused him of having egged on right-wing extremists to commit violence instead of merely monitoring them.

The ministers in the government of right-wing Likud Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu are exploiting Rabin to "falsify history," opposition Labour

party head Ehud Barak said Saturday.

"They're touting Rabin as if he were the only one responsible. He is fingered as the instigator of every act of provocation" against Rabin, Mr. Barak told the radio.

Labour leader Barak accused Mr. Netanyahu — at the time head of the opposition — of having "approved" of the virulent anti-Rabin propaganda which the left has said created the atmosphere which drove a young Jewish extremist to gun down Rabin on Nov. 4, 1995.

"At the time I saw Likud members demonstrating with posters reading, 'Rabin is a traitor' and 'Death to Rabin'," he said.

Questions over Rabin's role have intensified the

finger-pointing which has wracked Israeli politics since Rabin's murder. The left has often accused Mr. Netanyahu and the Likud of responsibility of creating the poisoned anti-Rabin climate, while the right-wing has accused the opposition of trying to stain it with the assassination.

Mr. Netanyahu said on Friday that the role of Rabin — who had the Shin Bet codename of "Champagne" — should be "clarified."

Former Shin Bet head Yaakov Peri retorted that Mr. Netanyahu's government was using Rabin to elude its responsibility in Rabin's assassination and pin the blame on the internal spy agency.

"This is no coincidence

that this is coming up now. Members of the government and others in the right are trying to put the blame on Shin Bet," he said.

The Shin Bet head at the time of Rabin's killing, Carmi Guillon, admitted Friday that Rabin had been "a problematic agent."

Mr. Netanyahu's Science Minister Michael Eitan repeated charges Saturday that "Champagne" had been "the leader of a vast campaign of provocation."

Rabin "was not marginal. Israelis remember the posters showing Rabin in a Nazi S.S. uniform which Rabin distributed at a time when he worked for an agency of the state," he said.



Batman still wears pyjamas every now and then

BUENOS AIRES (AFP) — Just to clear up any doubts, Adam West, the '60s cape-and-cowl icon who bedded Bad Guy as Batman, told reporters he and TV sidekick Robin were not playing a gay couple. But "people can imagine whatever they like" about the fictional relationship between the cohabiting crimefighters. West told a convention on comic books and science fiction here. These days, West said, he only suits up for Halloween. "And I have some Batman pyjamas I wear once in a while."

Rift between queen and Cherie over dress-code

LONDON (R) — In a land where men wear skirts, the wife of British Prime Minister Tony Blair is under fire for ditching hers during a visit to Queen Elizabeth at her Scottish country retreat. Never mind that women in trousers are old news, even in the hidebound home of tartan. Or that Prince Charles regularly wears a kilt during trips to Scotland while the queen, one of the richest women in the world, is devoted to her headscarf. News that Britain's unofficial first lady opted for pants in the royal presence has raised eyebrows and even stirred talk of a chasm between the modernising new Labour government and the crusty old house of Windsor.

'Dear Tony' attends summit

LONDON (R) — It was not your typical diplomatic exchange. Despite a long history of Anglo-French animosity and plenty of practice at summit pomposity, the leaders of France and Britain gushed in first-name terms on Friday as they faced the press after their closed-door talks. "Dear Tony," French Prime Minister Lionel Jospin began his introductory remarks in a tribute to British Prime Minister Tony Blair. French President Jacques Chirac also broke with summit formality, simply referring to Blair as "Tony" when he was given the floor. Not to be outdone, Blair joined in the show of goodwill, saying that he considered the French president just as much a friend as the Socialist premier.

Octopusi does job of shower, jacuzzi, stembath

BRUSSELS (R) — A horizontal shower, an electric walking stick, a disposable dog toilet and a detector for wet nappies are a few of the weird and wonderful items on show at Brussels 46th Annual Inventors Fair. The star of the show is the horizontal shower, the octopusi, a shower and a stembath, invented by Juan-Gabriel Antuna. The subject lies face down in a box resembling the type used by a magician to saw people in half, but with only the head sticking out at one end. The lid closes and a battery of 36 nozzles sends jets of high pressure warm water in waves up and down the body for eight minutes.

Scorsese prepares a movie biography of Dean Martin

LOS ANGELES (AFP) — Director Martin Scorsese is hoping that Tom Hanks will play the late actor, singer and all-American movie star Dean Martin in a bio-pic, the Daily Variety trade journal reported. John Travolta and Hugh Grant are on the shortlist to play Martin's best friend, Paul Sinatra and Peter Lawlor. Variety said. Comedian Carrey would play Dean Lewis in the movie.

Palestinian prisoners vow hunger strike along with woman prisoner

BETHLEHEM (AFP) — Nearly 900 Palestinians imprisoned by Israel threatened Saturday to launch a hunger strike in support of a woman prisoner who has refused food for 18 days, a human rights worker said.

Issa Qaraqeh, the head of the Palestinian rights group, Prisoners' Club, in the West Bank town of Bethlehem, told Agence France Presse (AFP) he had received a letter from the prisoners vowing to launch an "open-ended hunger strike."

"The letter, representing all the administrative detainees held by Israel, said they would start an open-ended hunger strike

when the hunger strike by Itaf Ayyan reaches its 20th day," Mr. Qaraqeh said.

Israel holds around 880 Palestinians in "administrative detention," a policy of open-ended detention without charge or trial, according to Prisoners' Club figures.

Ayyan, a member of Islamic Jihad, has been on hunger strike since her arrest on Oct. 21 and was moved to a prison hospital on Friday.

Islamic Jihad issued a statement Saturday calling on "all Palestinian political forces and international human rights groups to press for the release of Mujahid [holy warrior]

Ayyan."

"We warn the Zionists that they will never enjoy security as long as they continue to rob us of our rights and freedoms. Israel is driving the region to a new explosion with its policies," said the statement, received by AFP.

Ayyan, who had been released after nine years of prison in a general release of 30 women prisoners by Israel in February, was arrested amid a crackdown against Islamists launched by the army in August.

Most of the Palestinians currently under administrative detention were picked up in the same crackdown.

Fighting escalates between Kurd factions in north Iraq

ANKARA (AP) — More than 50 guerrillas have been killed in the past two days of fighting between rival Kurdish factions in northern Iraq, an Iraqi-Kurdish group said Friday.

The Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) said that fighters of the rival patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) launched nine attacks Wednesday and Thursday on its positions near the town of Degalah, 40 kilometres east of main Kurdish city Erbil.

The PUK attacked in collaboration with the Turkish-Kurd rebels of the Kurdish

Labour Party (PKK), the KDP said in a statement.

The KDP said its guerrillas repulsed the attacks, killing a total of 45 PUK and PKK combatants.

Fourteen KDP guerrillas were killed and 28 wounded, the KDP statement admitted.

The PUK and KDP, who have uneasily shared control of the Kurdish autonomous zone in northern Iraq since 1991, resumed fighting in October after observing a U.S.-brokered ceasefire for 12 months.

PUK and PKK rebels

formed an alliance earlier this year when the KDP began supporting Turkish forces in cross-border operations against the separatist PKK guerrillas, who have bases in north Iraq.

In Washington, a PUK spokesman dismissed the KDP report as "exaggerated" and described the latest fighting as regular skirmishes.

"We believe that this is happening to cover the deployment of Turkish tanks," Barham Saleh, told the Associated Press bureau in Cairo by telephone.

Souf camp gets its 'own' man to Lower House of Parliament

"We saw, this year, a chance for the first time to 'create' our own candidate, and we did," explains a resident. "He's one in the house, but he will be all of our voices."

Mr. Othman, an independent candidate who made an unsuccessful bid for the House in 1993, won Jerash's first seat, with 4,355 votes, ahead of incumbent candidate Mufleh Ruheimi, assumed to be one of the National Constitutional Party's "stealth candidates," who secured 4,191. Together, they amassed roughly 25 per cent of the ballots cast in the district last Tuesday.

Mr. Ruheimi's return to the Lower House wasn't much of a surprise as he was believed to be favoured by the influential Bani Hassan tribe among the seven candidates they fielded. But Mr. Othman's victory was less certain and depended on the suc-

cess or failure of further tribal alignment in the district, which proved to be disunited.

It was also aided, camp residents say, by the boycott of the IAF which in 1993 fielded a candidate who was both an IAF member and a tribal figure.

"We can say that we learned a lesson from the Islamists," a resident told the Jordan Times. "They know the meaning of 'strength in numbers'. If the camp wants a voice, it must act as one body. We also learned something from [the IAF] about organising the vote. They relied heavily on the women's vote in 1993, and that was important in the camp this year."

Souf residents claim that they are more than half of Mr. Othman's voters, and among their 2,500 votes cast, women's votes were more than one-third of the camp's vote.

Their expectations of Mr.

Othman, they say, are simple: create employment by both developing infrastructure in the camp and offering incentives to attract small businesses and industries.

A dingy cafe, at the end of the bus line running from Jerash proper to Souf, was full and lively last Thursday afternoon, but, says the owner, this isn't a weekend crowd; a full house can be found here any day of the week. It's the only way to pass the time, he says.

"We have no work," says Maher, a patron, on behalf of the congregation. "Those who do work don't make a living and usually, can only find temporary jobs, outside of Jerash. By the time people spend money on transportation, there is nothing left to feed families or pay bills."

Jobs, in fact, ranked higher on Souf's agenda than the rapidly collapsing peace process,

although most of Souf's residents are Palestinian refugees twice over: from 1948 and 1967.

"We know that [Othman] is not a miracle worker, and anyway, who consults the Parliament about this issue?" asks an elderly man. "I'm not relying on Riad Othman to secure my rights in Palestine — the U.S. can't do it, why should I expect him to?"

Instead, says one, Souf residents would prefer that Mr. Othman concentrate his efforts on bringing them into the mainstream of life in Jordan.

"Some people here see us as foreigners, as infringing on their rights as Jordanians," he said, referring to the controversial issue of the Jordanian-Palestinian dichotomy. "We're here. We live here. We're part of this country and we are looking for a voice."

The newly elected deputy is

well-known in many of Jerash's civic organisations: he is the president of the local committee for the disabled in Jerash's Gaza Camp, a member of the Jerash Consultative Council, a member of the board of Queen Alia Fund, Jerash, a member of the board at Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) and a member of the board of the JUST Agricultural College. He is also the head of the Higher Coordination Committee for the Handicapped in nine refugee camps.

He is active in the private sector and owns a transport company as well as agricultural land.

But where Souf has clearly identified an agenda for Mr. Othman's four-year parliamentary tenure, the deputy, born in Qalqilia in 1945, was non-committal regarding his programme, save that Jerash suffers under-representation in the Parliament,

which he will seek to rectify. But, as a self-described independent, was hesitant to ally himself with the cause of the Souf Camp.

"I am against 'wasta,'" he said during an interview with the Jordan Times. "I want to achieve equality and that's what I will work for."

"My slogans were that I'm honest and humble. I didn't promise miracles. I can't achieve that. I only asked for the public's confidence in my character. I follow basic and forthright principles, which means that I don't accept bribes and bargains."

"At the same time, I am independent. I'm not just a candidate of the camp, but all of Jerash," said Mr. Othman. "And first and foremost, we are Jordanians. We belong here. We live here. There are no differences among us."



By Amy Henderson
Special to the Jordan Times

SOUF REFUGEE CAMP — Fifty-five thousand votes, 22 candidates and two parliamentary seats should make for stiff competition in any electoral district.

But the absence of the Islamic Action Front (IAF) and a disunited tribal vote abetted the Souf Refugee Camp in placing "their" man, Riad Daoud Othman, in the Lower House, and for the first time, camp residents believe, they will have a voice, however, small, in the Parliament.